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TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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RED ARMY ON THE ODER

WARSAW—Eylau—Danzig: Lodz—Posen—Berlin: Caestochowa—Breslau—Dresden. Here, plain now on the map, are the three main axes along which groups of Russian "shock" armies, led respectively by Rokossovsky, Zhukov and Koniev, are thrusting into Germany's vitals. Completing the offensive, another army group, under Cherniakovsky, is converging from Tilsit and Insterburg on Koenigsberg; and, in the south, while Petrov's armies move along the Polish slopes of the Carpathians towards the Silesian coalfields and oil plants, the combined forces of Malinovsky and Tolbukhin are fighting a grim battle of attrition round Budapest—prelude to an advance along the axis Bratislava—Vienna—Prague. In ten days the enemy's outer defensive system guarding the Eastern approaches to the Reich has been shattered; unless the Russian offensive can be halted. Germany is faced with the prospect of a defeat which must be ultimately conclusive.

Will the Germans restore the position before irreparable damage is inflicted on their armies and industrial potential? We may suppose that they will now recall from Hungary some of the armoured divisions rashly committed south of the Danube; that, if they can muster shipping, they will belatedly try to transfer to Pomerania part of the 30 divisions left so long, for inscrutable motives, in Courland; and that there will be a gambler's desperate "switch" of forces from the West. Already the Russians report the arrival of a number of divisions from Holland and Belgium; and, if von Rundstedt keeps strictly to the defensive, more may follow. But strategic regrouping demands time; and this the Russians may not grant. Already two German armies in East Prussia are threatened with envelopment; the Marienburg-Elbing railway is under Rokossovsky's guns. With the capture of Bromberg, Zhukov has turned the lower Vistula positions. At the gates of Breslau, Koniev has all but severed industrial Silesia from the Reich.

To avert an otherwise decisive disaster the Germans must (and doubtless will) endeavour to re-form a front. Considering that there were possibly 80 German divisions between Tilsit and Cracow, Russian claims to prisoners are so far small; but this is not inconsistent with the supposition that large German forces, cohesion lost, now lie so far behind the Russian spearheads that few will succeed in evading the slower infantry "follow-up." The Russian supply problem must not be overlooked, though the rapidity of their advance has happily precluded "scorching" by the enemy, and captured supplies must be invaluable. It is on fresh divisions that the enemy must rely; but, if he can find them, where are they to be sent? To the north, where the military threat of a major encirclement is greatest? Or to the south, where the loss of Silesia is the gravest economic menace? Either course would involve the risk lest Zhukov drive straight on to Frankfurt-on-Oder; or, alternatively, wheeling north or south, he might take the enemy's reinforcements on their flank. The Russians have been at pains to conceal the relative strength in tanks of their three main spearheads; in the galaxy of generals mentioned in Stalin's Orders there has been no hint of the whereabouts of the Red Army "star" tank commander. As we see it to-day, the Eastern battlefield is a titanic chessboard on which Zhukov, at Posen, plays the role of Red Queen, poised for Mate in Three moves.

Behind the Battle

There are no surprises in the armistice terms imposed on Hungary, and they are definite: she knows her fate. Her frontiers go back to the pre-Munich lines and the partition of Transylvania is annulled. She must supply eight infantry divisions to fight the Germans and pay in kind, over six years, an indemnity valued at £75 millions. The equal rights of Jews are assured. News comes that the suppressed Left, more especially the industrial workers, contributed handsomely to the successes of the Red Army. They saved most of the industrial equipment from transfer to the Reich and fought bravely in the mining districts. Part of the explanation is that Social-Democrats and Communists (victims in common of a severe repression) were on good terms and managed to co-operate to good purposes. This the Communist leader, Joseph Révai, has acknowledged.

After the liberation of Warsaw, Cracow and Lodz, the Premier of the London Poles, Mr. Arciszewski, made a broadcast appeal for an understanding with Russia. He seems now to have abandoned any idea of fusion with the new Provisional Government, and proposes that an inter-Allied Commission shall, pending elections, administer Poland. We shall be surprised if there is any response to this plan. The London Poles have missed the tide.

King Peter of Yugoslavia has the audacity of youth. Having failed to convince either his own Premier, Dr. Subasic, or Marshal Tito that there was anything amiss with the agreement reached between them, he proceeded, of his own motion, to "dismiss" Subasic, but he now seems inclined to seek another compromise with his Premier. The King is presumably trading on the Marshal's well-known wish to remain on a footing of legality and continuity. We doubt whether Tito, who is an experienced tactician, will allow himself to be provoked into revolutionary courses. Mr. Churchill, who made his own attitude clear in last week's debate, will presumably find a suitable formula for ignoring the King and "presuming" the nullity of what he has done.

It is, however, to the Czechs that we have to look for the most instructive object lesson in the politics of the Russian sphere of influence. It seems that Moscow has asked Dr. Benes to recognise the Lublin Poles. To this he demurred, because he was unwilling to do anything that London and Washington might "misunderstand." A public rebuke for "ingratitude" followed in the columns of *War and the Working Class*. The next phase was a request that the Czech Government should hasten to transfer itself to its own liberated soil. To this it replied that it could not travel in a hurry, since it has a lot of luggage to carry. The third phase was that both on the spot and through the Kiev radio the Russians openly encouraged the agitation among the people of Carpatho-Ruthenia for incorporation in the U.S.S.R. Ukrainians by language and culture, their attachment to Czechoslovakia was one of the anomalies of Versailles. Nevertheless, the rap over Czech knuckles is sharp.

Henry Wallace

The President's choice of Henry Wallace as Secretary of Commerce, in place of his old adversary Jesse Jones, has led to the first serious clash with the opponents of the New Deal. This office is of the first importance, chiefly because it carries with it the administration of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. This is, in effect, a colossal bank authorised to make loans up to a maximum total of twelve thousand millions. It was used to finance the immense expansion of industrial plants required for the war. In Mr. Wallace's hands it would be the chief instrument in a policy of Full Employment after the war, and might be used to advance his schemes for the equipment of backward countries. The Republicans and the Conservative Southern Democrats have united to nullify the President's choice of Mr. Wallace and hope to achieve their ends by passing a Bill which removes the Corporation from the control of the Secretary of Commerce. Its sponsor is the diehard Democratic Senator George. The clash has been made additionally bitter by the personal resentment of Mr. Jones and by attacks on Mr. Wallace as an idealist who has no banking experience. It is possible that Senator George's Bill may secure a majority in the Upper Chamber and that the President may have to defeat this intrigue by using his veto.

Finance for Industry

Sir John Anderson has announced the forthcoming establishment of two companies whose function it will be to meet the financial needs of industry in the post-war period. One, to be named Finance Corporation for Industry, Ltd., is to have a capital of £25 millions and borrowing powers of four times that amount. The capital will be subscribed by the Bank of England, insurance companies and investment trusts in roughly equal proportions; the loan capital will be furnished by the joint stock banks. The company's purpose will be to provide industrial concerns with temporary or long-period finance for "quick rehabilitation." The second company, Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation, Ltd. (with £15 millions of share and £30 millions of loan capital, which is found by the joint stock banks), is to cater for the small business. The "Big" corporation is to have an "advisory" panel representing management and labour; and both corporations undertake to keep the appropriate Government Departments "informed" of their important doings. Otherwise, there is to be no Parliamentary control. In brief, this is the Government's and the City's bid to avoid the setting up of anything in the nature of a National Investment Board, and to keep the State outside the field of industrial investment. Whether it will take over the existing Bankers' Industrial Development Company and the Bank of England's Securities Management Trust we do not know; but it is an attempt to do what they were doing in the 'thirties. It is on a larger scale —though the total capital to be provided looks small in relation to the needs of such industries as cotton and coal. Apart from the obvious risk that the banks and issuing house will shoulder the Corporations with the task of buttressing inefficient concerns—keeping the plums for themselves —we fear that, unless there is State control, the new bodies, under the ægis of City finance, will in all probability be no more willing than their predecessors to take a big view. They will regard their problems from the view of "sound finance," rather than from that of fostering economic development in the public interest, defeating restrictionist policies, and helping to implement an effective programme of full employment.

The Bourbons of Industry

To nationalise the coal mines, declares Mr. Robert Foot, would be a counsel of despair. Despair for whom? For the miners? Hardly. For the consumers, who are sick and tired of the never-ending wrangle, and have long ago lost all confidence in the mineowners' capacity to manage the industry aright? Hardly that either. Presumably, then, for the owners themselves, who are as reluctant to lose their patents of nobility as the *haute noblesse* of 1789. It is at their behest that Mr. Foot has prepared his plan for a mineowners' corporation, very much after the manner of Hitler's arrangement for the conduct of German industry in distress, but with the one difference that the State is left out. Mr. Foot has camouflaged his proposed Central Board of Mineowners with a great deal of high-sounding talk about efficiency in the public interest; but the plain facts are that he rejects both compulsory amalgamations and any form of State interference, and leaves the entire control, except where it remains with each individual undertaking, in the hands of his Central Board—that is, of a *junta* of owners responsible to nobody. To the miners he offers merely continuance of joint consultative and negotiating machinery. They are, indeed, to have high wages "at a level giving them pride of place among industrial workers," while the owners are to get "a reasonable rate on the capital employed." Whence are these good gifts to come? Mr. Foot would presumably say from the higher efficiency which his plan is designed to promote; but it looks as if in practice they would be much more likely to come from bleeding the consumers. Unless we are to believe that a coal cartel would develop a conscience, Mr. Foot's much-heralded plan simply means that the mineowners have been at it again.

The Wage Councils Bill in Parliament

Mr. Ernest Bevin's Wage Councils Bill has been received with remarkable calm by those Tories who were violent in their opposition to the Catering Wages Bill only a year or so ago. Yet the Wage Councils Bill has every feature to which they took objection in its predecessor, and is of course of immensely wider application. If it becomes law, as it presumably will, there will be nothing to prevent the principle of minimum wages and standard conditions from being extended to every worker outside agriculture who is in any danger of being paid less than a living wage, though in practice a good many thousands of exceptionally ill-paid workers in highly miscellaneous and not easily classifiable trades will probably slip through its meshes. Agriculture has its own statutory machinery, and so have a few other occupations, such as cotton-weaving and road transport, apart from the trades covered by Trade Boards, which are to be brought under the new system. Can it be that the National Employers' Confederation has given the Tories in the House a hint that it would be unwise to fight Mr. Bevin on this particular ground? After all, nothing very dreadful from the employers' point of view has occurred in industries which have been brought under the Trade Board system. The logical corollary to the State guarantee of "social security" to the unemployed, the sick and the aged is a similar guarantee of a living wage to those actually at work. That is, in effect, what Mr. Bevin's Bill is meant to achieve.

Should a Banker Tell?

Are British bankers, or the Treasury, behind the (to us) quite shocking attitude adopted by City editors in the matter of money standing in London to the credit of French nationals? The French Government naturally wants to know the volume of assets "salted away" abroad by Frenchmen: it may want to include them in any future levy on capital, or to require their surrender (in exchange for francs) in order to pay for vitally needed imports. Now the British Government, under Section 8 of the Defence (Finance) Regulations, can compel British banks to disclose the holders of these French credits in London; and the French Government, whose decree calling for a declaration of all money held abroad has been ignored, are asking for this neighbourly assistance. No, no—say the City's spokesmen; if bankers "told," London would lose business as an international banking centre. Are we really dependent, for national prosperity, on acting as a safe-deposit for Europe's escape money?

PARLIAMENT: "A Famous Victory"

Wednesday noon

THE Greek debate was staged on a war Vote of Credit—a trap whose nature was not apparent to members when it was first announced. This meant that anyone who voted against the Government's Greek policy could be accused of voting against the war effort (just as the Labour Party is now always accused by dishonest Tories of having voted "against rearmament" before the war). It also meant that some enthusiast would almost certainly be tempted (as Acland was) to put down an amendment; and that the figures in the subsequent division, with its small opposition lobby, would be advertised throughout the world as evidence of Parliament's overwhelming support for the Government.

Sensitive Socialists squirmed during the first day's winding-up speech by Attlee—a painful example of psychological prestidigitation, of an honest man juggling with his soul. The debate reached a higher level on the second day, when Hore-Belisha made another of his statesmanlike genuflexions to Authority, full of "conflagration" and "immutable facts" and "preponderating moral strength" and much other such lullaby magniloquence; and Hector McNeil staunchly defended the responsible press against the Prime Minister's wounded snarls.

It is worth studying closely the speech in which Eden replied to the whole debate. Attlee had undertaken that Eden would deal with various statements in Cocks's speech which Attlee said were mistaken: he did not, except very cursorily. Eden himself implied that he was going to deal in some detail with Acland's long and highly documented speech: he did not. Nor, of course, did he grapple with the broader issues of history and principle raised by Bevan.

A special word of praise is due to Lipson, an Independent of the moderate Right, and one of the most active Members of the House, who expressed the anxiety felt by many sane and thoughtful people, not to be identified with the Left, in Cheltenham or elsewhere. Hogg's stature was diminished (if one may be permitted so infinite an extension of meiosis) by an exhibition of demagogic puerility which embarrassed even the other members of the Tory Reform Committee.

Fewer than one-third of the Labour M.P.s (including Ministers and other hostages) voted for the Government. How many of the rest abstained deliberately is not known; abstentions, perhaps unfortunately, are not recorded.

Otherwise, last week was chiefly notable for a speech by Herbert Morrison on plural voting, which explained with great deftness why it would be immoral, for those who, like him, disapproved of plural voting, not to vote for it on this particular occasion: "good business," it seemed, had been done by the Labour representatives on the Speaker's Committee in securing from the Tories so sizeable a concession as the ending of the businessman's spouse's vote (which only came in by mistake, as Sir Percy Harris and others showed clearly, as part of the general women's franchise, and was never intended by Parliament).

Boothby raised an unusual and important point at question-time. Major-General Sir Edward Spears, who lately held a high official post in the Middle East, is now asking a number of questions, based on his own personal official knowledge, which are both embarrassing to the Government and distasteful to our French Allies. Boothby suggested that this was, so to speak, "taking advantage." The Speaker said that such questions were not out of order, but hinted delicately that caution was desirable in Members with such special experience.

The Lords applied their minds to the burning grievances of philatelists in the Forces.

PONTIFEX MINOR

ON THE DOTTED LINE

In broadcasts to Germany the B.B.C. has done all it could do with the Prime Minister's latest definition of Allied attitude after victory is won. In transmissions summarising in German the Prime Minister's speech they gave significant, and timely, emphasis to his assurances that the enforcement of unconditional surrender "in no way relieves the victorious Powers of their obligations to humanity, or of their duties as civilised and Christian nations"; that our actions will be confined within "strict moral limits"; that "we are no extirpators of nations, or butchers of peoples"; and that peace after capitulation, "will bring to Germany and Japan an immense, immediate amelioration of the suffering and agony which now lies before them."

So far, so good. As a reminder that abuse of victory has never been a British tradition and that talk of peace terms aimed deliberately at the extermination of the vanquished is no more than ignorant chatter, these are well-chosen, statesman-like words. But they have one serious shortcoming: the generalisations to which Mr. Churchill committed himself are so broad that German listeners, indoctrinated by Dr. Goebbels' "Strength Through Terror" propaganda, may well seek in vain for definite assurance that the peace that would follow surrender will not be worse than dying in the last German ditch. Those who might otherwise lead them to give up their futile struggle are still required to "sign on the dotted line," with no precise knowledge in any particular of the instrument to which they are subscribing.

The factors which have combined to create among the Allied Governments, and particularly in London, this policy of negation merit examination. Mr. Churchill tried, first, to evade the issue by resorting to what was really a demagogic trick unworthy of the occasion. "Should it," he asked, "be unconditional surrender, or should we make some accommodation with [the enemy] through a negotiated peace, leaving them free to regather their strength for a renewal of the struggle after a few uneasy years"? To pose such a question is to erect a false, unreal antithesis. No reputable voice has been raised in this country to urge peace by compromise; the idea of ending the war by a Truce of Amiens which preserved for Germany any ability to rearm, or to embark on renewed aggression, is by universal agreement unthinkable. Though we have criticised "unconditional surrender" as a phrase devoid of constructive content and unhelpful to our armies in the field, neither we nor any other responsible critics of Allied policy towards Germany have suggested that we should abate by one iota our determination to secure an act of formal capitulation from whatever authority may exist in Germany in the hour of final defeat.

The practical, and unanswered, question is: What follows capitulation? According to Mr. Churchill, a settlement whose "painful details," if disclosed while the enemy still has arms in his hands, "might well become a greater obstacle to the end of the struggle than the broad generalisation," on which he chooses to rely. This we find difficulty in believing: it is the unknown which terrifies; and few, if any, Germans to-day look for a peace in which they will be saved from the need to expiate the past. The trouble is that though many unofficial plans for rendering Germany innocuous by dismemberment, or (as in Mr. Morgenthau's proposals) by "pastoralisation," have gained currency, there has been no hint that any concrete scheme, to follow unconditional surrender, has been agreed on or elaborated in any detail, painful or otherwise, by the Big Three. And, in the absence of such agreement, fear of being suspected by other Allies of "softness," or even of wanting to do a deal with Germany, has paralysed planning. Every positive suggestion that has been put forward for the post-hostilities administration of Germany has been timorously scrutinised lest, for instance, some in the United States should charge the White House with "letting Germany off," and (still more) lest Moscow should read into this or that British or American action an underlying intention to use Germany hereafter against the U.S.S.R.

It may well be that the Russians bear their share of responsibility for this impasse. By all accounts their representatives on the European Advisory Council have been inclined to "stall" and to plead necessity for reference to the Kremlin when items in post-hostilities plans for Germany have figured on the agenda. If a blue-print for tri-partite rule of occupied Germany is, so far, conspicuously invisible, it is not wholly the fault of Britain or the United States. But, apportion responsibility as we may, the absence of agreed common policy has already led to decisions ominous for the future. In the sterile cause of "toughness," General Eisenhower has been directed to enact a "no fraternisation" order so rigid that it would make nonsense, if it were observed, of necessary relations between Allied occupation officials and Germans. Lest he be accused of promoting Germany's "rehabilitation," he forbids the salvage of valuable German machinery which winter weather is now irrevocably ruining in Aachen and other occupied towns. Rather than incur the suspicion that we admit the existence of "good" or trustworthy Germans, we intend (it appears) to refrain from distinguishing between any non-Nazi political parties in Germany; to confine recognition of German "authority" to strictly limited municipal needs; to close all schools and universities until we can provide them with individually selected teachers of our choice; to restrict publications to such as a (necessarily limited) corps of Allied supervisors can directly control; and to sanction only such industrial production as Allied needs require.

Now this is not a "painful settlement"; it is the creation of a vacuum. And it is just the sort of consequence to signing on the dotted line that must discourage any German surrender. "Thou shalt not kill, but need'st not strive officiously to keep alive." Excluding those guilty of war crimes (and their numbers, of course, extend considerably beyond the ranks of Party leaders, Gestapo and S.S.) Germans scarcely need to be told that the Allies do not intend extermination by rope or firing-squad: they do not expect to be butchered. What is nerving them to last-ditch desperation is fear lest the Allies, *out of deep-seated suspicion of each other*, let Germany lapse through inaction into a ruined no-man's-land in which no wheel turns, there are no wages nor bread, and pestilence marches with the underground gun-man.

We reiterate the need for a positive Anglo-American policy for defeated Germany. We believe that the attitude of the U.S.S.R. is no insuperable stumbling-block. The Russians, to whose immense exertions Allied victory in Europe will be mainly due, are fully entitled to a large, perhaps a predominant, say in the shaping of Germany's frontiers and future. We do not doubt that, in the areas of the Reich which they occupy, they will liquidate with pitiless efficiency the Party irreconcilables and all those who have been guilty of war crimes. We expect them to insist on the complete and permanent demobilisation of Germany's war machine, and on recovering from Germany—in kind, or by *corvée*—such reparation as is possible for the havoc wrought by the Wehrmacht on Russian soil. We know that in relation to the Reich's eastern frontiers they have in mind territorial adjustments aimed at promoting security for the U.S.S.R.; and it would not be surprising if they demanded that, in the West, the great war potential of the Rhineland and Westphalia should never again be in unqualified German control.

The destructive use of victory, against which our protests are levelled, is likely to attract the U.S.S.R. only if Marshal Stalin feels that the forces of Big Business behind President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill are so inherently inimical to Russian interests that, in time, they will not hesitate to rebuild Germany as a "bulwark against Bolshevism." But for the inclusion of that possibility in Soviet calculations, there can be little doubt that Russian realism would recognise that no reparations, either in consumers' goods or machine tools, can be extracted for any length of time from a Reich in whose roofless factories nettles grow; that the unparalleled impoverishment which National Socialism and its war aftermath have brought to the Continent cannot be made good by Anglo-American "relief," without such abstinence and self-denial as the British and American publics would never tolerate; and that the post-war reconstruction of Europe as a whole demands a system of mutual aid in which a Germany, disarmed and purged, weakened (it must be) by forfeiture of territory and resources but still a viable industrial country, is both allowed and required to play its share.

In the "liberated" Balkans the Russians have pursued the eminently practical policy of making things work for them. They may feel differently towards Germans—and we do not mistake for sentimentality their propaganda exploitation of Paulus and his fellow captive Generals—but they are the last people to let their policy be confused and bedevilled by meaningless arguments about "soft" and "hard" peace terms. Is a peace "soft" which ensures that a disarmed Germany is required to contribute by hard work (which implies food and the functioning of mines and railways) to the reconstruction of Europe? Is there virtue in "hard" terms under whose enforcement nothing flourishes in Germany but clandestine violence? To any peace terms for Germany the Russians will apply the test of pragmatic utility—unless they fear Anglo-American intentions. To disabuse Marshal Stalin of such fears should be the prime task of President and Prime Minister when the Big Three meet. If they can do that, is it too much to hope that from this Conference may emerge, not terms on which Germany can "negotiate," but a brief, clear statement of Allied intentions which the German soldier and workman can weigh against the utter ruin which awaits his country if he fights in every street and farmstead between Rhine and Oder?

REBUILDING BRITAIN

It is no easier to-day than it was twelve months ago to separate fact from fancy in the plans that are being laid for the rebuilding of Britain. We have before us, no doubt, many more plans, from the ambitious schemes for replanning London and Plymouth to the more detailed projects for new housing estates, slum clearance schemes, and new civic centres which have been put forward by many local authorities. What we are no better able to estimate is the prospect of these plans being carried out; for in most cases they have either been made without any estimate of costs or, where costs have been tentatively reckoned up, look prohibitive unless the Government is prepared to come to the assistance of their sponsors much more handsomely than it has so far shown any sign of being ready to do.

The basic facts are that we need to-day far more additional houses than we have any prospect of getting for a good many years to come, even if we postpone demolition of all houses that can be somehow patched up to serve for a further period. By the time we have built the four million houses which are supposed to be the target for the post-war long-term programme, we shall need another three millions to replace houses which will by

that time be utterly obsolete, and in most cases definitely unfit for habitation. Sir Ernest Simon, in the book* in which he has just embodied the results of his service at the Ministry of Works and his experience over many years as a practical housing expert, believes that the answer to this problem will need to be spread over a period of twenty years or so, and that we shall have done well if we have solved it within that time.

The problem involves three kinds of planning: a man-power plan, a materials plan, and an actual building plan. It involves besides, and by no means as a secondary matter, the planning of the requisite finance; and it can hardly be solved, either, without planning the use of land and replanning in some degree the structure of local government. With no one of these six things have we yet reached a satisfactory stage: with most of them, we can hardly be said to have reached any stage at all.

The man-power problem is, on paper, the nearest to solution. It has been agreed in principle that the number of workers in the building industry shall be raised to a million and a quarter over a period of three or four years from the word "Go." But no one knows yet when the word will be given. It is admitted that for at least a couple of years after the end of the war (in Europe?) we shall have to be content with emergency measures based on a grossly inadequate skilled labour force; and the period of improvisation will be a good deal longer than this unless what labour there is can be kept rigidly for work of high priority in face of the claim of innumerable persons to get their dilapidated houses put back in apple-pie order at once. Even more will it be necessary to curb the claims of tradesmen, hotel and cinema proprietors, and other persons for whom appearance is a form of commercial advertisement, from swallowing up skilled labour which will be surely needed for erecting or renovating not only houses but also schools and community centres.

Man-power will be short for some years, whatever we do. Materials, except seasoned timber, need not be, but almost certainly will be unless drastic steps are taken to ensure adequate supplies at reasonable prices. Some of us remember how the housing schemes of 1919 and 1920 came to grief largely because of a monstrous ramp in the prices of building materials—a ramp which the Government, despite the revealing report of the Committee on Trusts, did nothing whatever to check. It is impossible to doubt that, in the absence of really effective measures of price-control, the same thing will happen after this war, or that, if it does happen and housing costs are forced up by it as they were last time, there is grave danger of a remedy being sought not in disciplining the rings, but in curtailing the housing programme on grounds of expense.

The problem of expense is going to be serious enough in any event. The Dudley standard house, at a price list 30 per cent. in excess of that of 1939 (current prices are of course up in the building industry by much more) will cost £700. This, without subsidy and with interest rates at 3 per cent., would mean a gross rent, including local rates, of about £1 a week, as against about 12s. before the war. On the basis of pre-war cost, the subsidy under the Act of 1930 was 6s. a week on local authority houses, leaving 6s. on the average for the slum-clearance or overcrowding scheme removal tenant to pay. At the same rate of subsidy, he would have to pay 14s. after the war, even if costs were up by only 30 per cent. and interest rates were kept down to 3 per cent. How much of this enormous gap is the Government likely to be ready to bridge?

Sir Ernest Simon thinks we must get the cost of the standard house down to £600, if we are to make a scheme which will stand up to post-war pressure for economy in Government spending and will provide houses at rents the poorer tenants can afford to pay. This certainly cannot be done without both a tight hand over the producers of materials, the middleman, the contractors, the Trade Unions—in fact, everybody—or without lower standards of accommodation, at any rate in the earlier years. The figures of costs which appear in the booklet† on "demonstration houses" just issued by the Ministry of Works are not at all encouraging from this point of view. Sir Ernest Simon's £700 includes cost of land; but the costs at current prices of labour and materials only for the various types of concrete, steel, brick and other houses on exhibition at Northolt range from £755 (for a flat in a block) to about £900.

All these figures leave out of account the special costs which will occur whenever it is proposed to re-house urban populations on expensive land. The rejection of the Uthwatt scheme and the failure to put forward any adequate proposals for financial help to local authorities even in severely damaged areas, leaves all this side of the rebuilding problem in a hopeless tangle, and renders it impossible for any local authority to work out any serious plans. The most authorities can do at present is to work out plans for building the very small number of houses there will be any chance of their getting built within a year or two; and even this is difficult, without putting the houses in unsuitable places, in the absence of satisfactory arrangements for land acquisition.

Yet, somehow, the houses, the schools, the community buildings—to say nothing of the factories needed to bring our industries up to date—must get built. One of two things must happen. Either the costs must be got down, however drastic may be the measures needed for this, or there must be a reduction in standards a long way below what we have come to regard as the right minimum for houses which require official approval—as all houses should. There is, moreover, a further factor, not yet mentioned, which will tend either to inflate costs or to reduce standards or quality—or perhaps both. The Government, like the Conservative Party, which has just issued its own proposals for post-war housing,§ is plainly set on getting as many as possible of the post-war houses erected by speculative builders rather than under local authority ownership. The Minister of Health has already announced that subsidies will be given to such builders on the same terms as to the local authorities. But such building is bound to mean capital raised at higher rates of interest than the local authorities have to pay, and will therefore tend to raise the rents unless the quality is reduced.

This is a jeremiad, we know. But is it not about time to face realities in this vital matter, and, having faced them, to adopt the obviously necessary reforms? These are, first, provision for acquisition of all necessary land at reasonable prices—which, now that the Uthwatt compromise has been abandoned, means nationalisation; secondly, the utmost cheapening of materials and components—which means tight control over rings and combines and the largest possible production in Government-owned factories as soon as they can be released from war use; thirdly, finance at the lowest possible rates of interest—which means that local authorities or public corporations, and not speculative financiers, must order and own the buildings; and fourthly, a real Housing Ministry or a Public Commission with wide powers, to take charge of, and to co-ordinate, the whole affair. In addition, if we are to put the houses in the right places, we must have a real control of location, for factories as well as houses, a real National Authority and Regional Authorities for town and country planning, and a sensible allocation of costs between national and local finance. Without these things, our post-war housing policy is a sham; and we are heading straight for a repetition of the disasters of 1919–1921.

* REBUILDING BRITAIN: A TWENTY YEAR PLAN. By SIR ERNEST SIMON. *Gollancz.* 6s.

† DEMONSTRATION HOUSES. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 1s.

§ LOOKING AHEAD: A POLICY FOR HOUSING IN ENGLAND AND WALES. Conservative Party. 6d.

PEACE WITH E.L.A.S.?

LAST week's debate in the Commons on Greece followed the now familiar formula for dividing Labour. Mr. Churchill played for Die-hard cheers and got them; thereafter, not without skill, Mr. Eden soothed the ruffled tempers of the Labour Party. The atmosphere would have been very different had the House known that, four days before the debate, E.L.A.S. had undertaken to release all its hostages except the collaborationists and some whom it accuses of common law crimes. In fact, many were already released, stating that they had been well treated and fed, though the villagers were "very poor." Unhappily one British hostage, Mr. Henderson, an elderly man, died of exposure.

That atrocities have occurred we do not doubt; they always do in Balkan wars. There is the shocking exhumation of bodies witnessed by Sir Walter Citrine. There is, too, the report by a U.S. broadcaster, Mr. Donald Coe, that he saw a grave which contained, amongst others, 40 victims of British air attacks against a working-class quarter. Greece is a grave-yard: the Germans took reprisals, according to the official figure, on 1,600 Greek villages.

Mr. Coe went on to say that "a day and night hunt" was still going on in Athens, conducted by the Metaxas gendarmerie. Moreover, the fighting has been followed by economic reprisals on a large scale. All the workers employed by the gas, water and electricity companies of Athens who answered the call of E.L.A.S. have been dismissed, and to this severity Mr. Churchill gave his approval. It is in the light of such facts as these that we have to judge the undertaking of General Plastiras that no one shall be punished for bearing arms in the "rebellion." His former threat to punish the leaders "implacably" has been tacitly withdrawn, and this is an immense gain. But it is not easy to hope for reconciliation while police terror continues.

Mr. Churchill distorted history with more than his customary recklessness, but several new facts emerged. It is clear, to begin with, that he made up his mind in the first days of August of last year to treat E.A.M. as an enemy. That is the inference from the instruction, recently referred to in this journal and quoted verbatim by Mr. Aneurin Bevan, which the Political Warfare Executive issued on August 1st:

> The Prime Minister has ruled that, in principle, no credit of any kind is to be given to E.L.A.S. or E.A.M. on the B.B.C.

It is in the light of that ruling that we have to interpret the subsequent military measures. To the charge that E.A.M. intended to carry out "a hideous massacre" in Athens, the answer is simple. It was in undisputed control of Athens for about 36 hours before any British troops arrived. No massacre occurred. In Salonica it was in control for many weeks, and again no massacre occurred. Mr. Churchill omitted from his narrative the various steps which E.L.A.S. interpreted as a challenge—(1) the bringing from Italy to Athens of the Royalist Mountain Brigade; (2) the issue by General Scobie of orders for the total disarmament of E.L.A.S., notwithstanding the compromise reached in the Athens Cabinet; (3) the shooting down by the gendarmerie of the peaceful E.A.M. demonstration in Constitution Square. Even then, two days elapsed before our troops were involved. No use was made of that interval to promote a settlement, or even a truce.

It is good news that E.L.A.S. has now named its delegation which is to negotiate a definite peace with Plastiras. But the hope of a reconciliation will depend on the ability of our representatives to make this ruthless man understand that he was placed in office to get peace. The pledge that Mr. Eden gave the House on December 20th, that a government representing all sections of Greek opinion, "including E.A.M.," has still to be fulfilled.

THE TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA

[The author of this important article is Associate Editor of *Fortune*; War Correspondent for *Time and Life*, former representative of the combined American-British press in Yugoslavia.]

AFTER eight months spent in Bosnia, Dalmatia, Serbia and Belgrade, I feel I can sum up the situation in Yugoslavia as follows.

(1) A fact of paramount importance is that the Partisans have been able to establish a stable, orderly Government, which does not have to engage in civil war, but is devoting itself to total mobilisation and the prosecution of the war "until Berlin falls." This fact is due not only to Marshal Tito's formidable military power—he now has an army of half a million—but also to the firm political discipline of the National Liberation Front and to the large support it enjoys throughout the country.

It is my considered opinion that the National Liberation Front would obtain, at this moment, at least 70 per cent. of the Yugoslav popular vote in free elections supervised by an inter-Allied Commission. The important point here is that Marshal Tito is likely to get a majority from every one of the five Yugoslav nationalities—Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Croats and Slovenes—so that there would be no imposition of National Liberation rule by one nationality over another.

Since Tito is a Croat and Mihailovich a Serb, the latter has long appeared as the legitimate representative of Serbdom. But even before the liberation of Serbia, Tito had about six times more Serbs under arms than Mihailovich had. In free elections Serbs outside Serbia proper (about four million) would almost certainly give an overpowering majority to Tito, while even in Serbia proper (about 2½ million) the National Liberation Front would very probably poll more than 50 per cent. of the vote. Tito has more backing in the villages than in the cities; but then Yugoslavia is an 80 per cent. peasant country.

(2) The unexpected Partisan-Russian advance in Serbia last autumn seems to have caught Mihailovich by surprise. In October he fled with a small detachment to Bosnia and then to northern Dalmatia (not to Italy, as reported), leaving confusion among his units in Serbia. Some of his commanders in Serbia (Kesserovich, Kalabich, etc.) continued to fight the Partisans, and even the Russians; others, such as Piletich and Stankovich, surrendered to the Russians to avoid being captured by the Partisans; yet another fraction of Mihailovich's units roamed the Serbian forests, not knowing whom to fight; still another fraction disbanded and filtered back to their homes. I have met Mihailovich officers who last August and September reported to fight the Germans and returned clandestinely to Belgrade, weeping; while the *Wehrmacht* was retreating from Serbia, they had been sent to fight the Partisans. At no time has any Mihailovich unit been reported attacking a German position in the battle for the liberation of Serbia.

Certain evidence from Belgrade now shows that Mihailovich's underground organisation in Serbia leaned heavily on Quisling Nedich's administration. This, in turn, through its "Special Police," maintained liaison with the German authorities. The power-politics idea behind these relationships appears to have been that, if and when the Anglo-Americans invaded Serbia, Nedich would hand his administration over to Mihailovich, who then would place himself at the disposal of the Anglo-American Command. When Nedich's administration was destroyed by the Partisans and the Russians, Mihailovich's underground organisation fell apart.

There is now court evidence that Nedich's "Special Police" in Belgrade arrested "Communists" according to black-lists submitted either by the Gestapo or by Mihailovich's headquarters. Villages in the immediate vicinity of the city, like Kumodrazh and others, were ruled by Chetnik authorities, who were accorded free travel to and from German-occupied Belgrade.

I possess the eye-witness testimony of high Chetnik officers that on September 16th, 1944, with the Russian army already in Serbia, Mihailovich had a meeting with Herr Staerker, Chief Adviser to Neubacher, Ribbentrop's deputy in Belgrade, in the village of Badovinsti, near the town of Shabats, west of Belgrade—and that a week later the Germans supplied Mihailovich's Headquarters with 5,500 rifles. According to the Partisans, Mihailovich is a traitor and an enemy of the people. According to his disappointed followers, he is a fumbler and a Hamlet. In any case, he has hardly any organisation left.

(3) Whatever opposition there is to Marshal Tito in Serbia seems to be disorganised and inactive. It is composed partly of the Pan-Serbian followers of Mihailovich, Nedich and Lyotich; partly of war-weary people to whom Partisan total mobilisation against the Germans does not appeal; and largely of people who for three and a half years under the occupation had been subject to terrifying enemy and Quisling propaganda about the "Red Danger."

The typical example is Belgrade. Upon liberation, last October, the city was perhaps 80 per cent. anti-Partisan. For a week civilians did not dare to show up on the streets. Then markets and shops opened gradually, fur-coated women came out; and, in spite of the rumours of mass executions, the dreaded Partisans appeared not to be such Red cut-throats after all. After two months the opposition dwindled down to perhaps 50 per cent. If the Partisans continue their present policy of "no reprisals, except against proved Fascists," they may win the support of the majority of the Belgrade population. Even when Belgrade was perhaps 80 per cent. anti-Partisan, the weakness of the opposition was striking. There was no attempt at a mass demonstration against Tito, no attempt at signing a collective letter of protest, not a single wall inscription, "Down with Tito." This is important evidence about a city notoriously rebellious.

(4) The Mihailovich mystery could be unravelled only upon the liberation of Belgrade. There is now court evidence that certain Mihailovich commanders were "in cahoots" with the Germans and, for instance, maintained headquarters at the *Café Takovo* on the Teraziye Square in German-occupied Belgrade. There is also court evidence that certain other Mihailovich people were executed at the Banyitsa Camp, near Belgrade. The truth of the matter is that Mihailovich's followers in Serbia consisted of genuine collaborators and of genuine patriots. The Germans, as well as Nedich's "Special Police," knew who was who, and protected the first while persecuting the others.

When this reality became obvious last November Marshal Tito proclaimed an amnesty; membership in Mihailovich's organisation was not to be a punishable act; only persons guilty of direct collaboration with the enemy or the Quislings, or persons responsible for common crimes, would be sentenced to death or to forced labour.

Belgrade rumour—popularly called "Radio Aunt Mileva"—last October placed the number of Belgrade people arrested by the Partisans at 60,000. Actually, in the first four weeks, the Partisan authorities arrested about 5,000 people in Belgrade, out of a total population of 300,000. Of these, 105 were shot, about 2,000 were released, and the remainder were kept for further investigation, or sentenced to forced labour.

(5) The only organised political party in liberated Yugoslavia is the Communist Party. It was third strongest in the only free Yugoslav elections of 1921. In that year it was banned, and since then its popular strength has never been tested by legal means. The other seven Yugoslav political parties, legitimate before the war, have disintegrated. While the illegal Communist party, from top to bottom, joined the National Liberation Movement, the leaders of every other party split among themselves in 1941. Some went abroad, some joined Mihailovich, some entered Partisan ranks, some approached the Quislings, and some adopted a passivity toward the invaders.

The National Liberation Front, led by the Communist Party, draws its main strength from the leaderless voting masses of these seven old political parties. It is unlikely that the old, rather discredited, party machines will be restored within the National Liberation Front. The Front's majority are non-Communists, but for the time being they qualify as informal "democratic groups," not as organised political parties. Party differentiation, on an entirely new basis, is bound to develop within the National Liberation Front after the war. But it is expected that for some time after the war no free-for-all party competition for power will take place in Yugoslavia. The National Liberation Front will appeal to the electorate as one organisation, and any differences of opinion that arise will be settled in meetings within the Front. Partisan spokesmen point out that Fascism must be given no legal chance to rear its head after its defeat on the battlefield, and that consequently democracy of the pre-war French type, with some twenty competing political parties, must be avoided. The new democratic political system, they say, is already being worked out in practice.

(6) There is much propaganda in Yugoslavia for the "heroic Yugoslav Communist Party"—which in 1941 alone is said to have lost 10,000 of its organised members on the battlefields—but none for the Communist system of government or society. In eight months I have not seen or heard of a single slogan calling for Communism, or found out about a single attempt to collectivise a private farm, shop or factory. The uniform propaganda phrase is "Federal Democratic Yugoslavia." Private property and initiative have repeatedly been proclaimed to stay under the National Liberation regime; for the chief National Liberation fighter is the highly individualistic peasant. Only enterprises owned by the pre-war monarchical State—such as the State monopolies of tobacco, matches, petrol, salt, some mines, etc., and the property belonging to the convicted "enemies of the people," may remain State-owned under the National Liberation Government. Foreign capital is to be let in again, probably under new "concession" contracts.

Only parts of Voyvodina and Srem, north and west of Belgrade, may lend themselves to an experiment in State or collective farming. Hundreds of thousands of acres there, complete with farmhouses, were abandoned last autumn by the half-million *Volksdeutschen*—the German minority fleeing with the German army before the Partisan-Russian assault. The Partisan authorities are now mobilising labour brigades to plough and sow these lands, which later may be used as State or collective farms—if tractors should be available—or distributed as private property among the National Liberation fighters and land-hungry peasants from the starving regions of Yugoslavia. In any case, the German minority problem in Yugoslavia has already been solved by the German army itself, according to Hitler's own precept of forcible resettlement.

There is no evidence of anti-religious propaganda in Yugoslavia. Bearded Serbian Orthodox priests have proved such a tonic to the Partisan fighting morale that the saying goes among the Serbs, "*Yedna brada kao brigada*" (a beard is worth a brigade). Partisan attitude toward religion—Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Moslem or Jewish—is that of separation of Church and State. The Serbian Orthodox Metropolitan Joseph in Belgrade, fearing demotion by the Partisans, received courtesy visits by high National Liberation Army officers.

The Partisans are sometimes trying to introduce a crusading Puritanical code among the hastily liberated citizens; no drinking, no gambling, no flirtation. They will sometimes break into a house to tear up the playing cards, and the most common complaint in Belgrade is not that they molest women, but that they round them up for doing the solders' laundry.

STOYAN PRIBICHEVICH

(To be concluded)

A LONDON DIARY

It is very pleasant every now and again to find a precise harmony between oneself and the Very Great. On December 23rd, in an article on "Power Politics and the Big Three," this journal wrote: "Protests about the immorality of world politics only begin to be useful when they recognise the facts of power, and are directed against its *misuse*." The article went on to point out that America was up to its neck in power politics. For the U.S.A. to be non-co-operative about world aviation, for instance, was just as much as to demand a "sphere of influence" as for Russia to seek to dominate in Poland or Britain in Greece. In his recent speech Mr. Roosevelt used the same phrase, and Mr. Churchill, commenting on it last week in the House, said that "with that marvellous gift which he has of bringing troublesome issues down to earth and reducing them to the calm level of ordinary life, the President declared, in his recent message to Congress, that power politics were 'the misuse of power.'" Mr. Churchill added: "Is having the largest Air Force in the world, with bases in every part of the world, power politics?"

* * *

Why did the Prime Minister have to pretend that we were disinterested in Greece? Ernest Bevin, at the Labour Party Conference, honestly said that we were there for strategic reasons. If the Government had based its case on this truth it would not have had to rely on evidence which proves false. I could list columns of official statements from Athens that have proved untrue, but I am more interested in the explanation. I think it is that when there is supposed to be a danger of Communism in a sphere of British interest, no weapon is considered too base to use. I believe this to be a profoundly mistaken policy, since E.A.M. was in fact overwhelmingly friendly to Britain and would willingly have agreed to the British use of the Piraeus and Salonica as bases. I say this with some confidence as a result of personal talk with E.A.M. leaders and reports from service officers and others recently back from Greece. Mr. Angelopolous, the Minister of Reconstruction in the Papandreou Government, who was here a few months ago, completely trusted the British and believed that we were ready to collaborate with E.A.M. in rehabilitating Greece.

* * *

When Mr. Chamberlain complained, during the Munich period, that press criticism was "fouling our own nest," Mr. Churchill replied in one of his strongest utterances with a warning that this attitude would lead to the suppression of all our liberties. It is some measure of the corruption of power that when, to-day, Mr. Churchill is himself seriously criticised by almost all the well-informed press, he rebukes it for damaging our reputation abroad, and suggests that the obviously careful and precise information and comments in *The Times* and other papers are irresponsible. Significantly, I note, Captain McEwen spoke of the Prime Minister's "warning," as if the next step were a concentration camp for the editors of *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*.

* * *

A correspondent has called my attention to a remarkably realistic memorandum drawn up by Balfour on the future status of Poland. The date was November, 1916, and the occasion a request from the Prime Minister to Cabinet Ministers to express their views on the Peace Settlement. Balfour stated first that he would like to see the new Poland include as much as possible of what was then German and Austrian Poland as well as what was then Russian Poland. He went on:—

> But I should *not* like to see the old Kingdom of Poland restored. I should fear that the new Poland would suffer from the diseases through which the old Poland perished; that it would be a theatre of perpetual intrigues between Germany and Russia; and that its existence, so far from promoting the cause of European peace, would be a perpetual occasion of European strife.

Moreover, even if such a Poland were capable of playing the part of an efficient buffer State (which I doubt), I am not sure that a buffer State between Germany and Russia would be any advantage to Western Europe. If Germany were relieved of all fear of pressure from Russia, and were at liberty to turn her whole strength towards developing her western ambitions, France and Britain might be the sufferers; and I am not by any means confident that cutting off Russia from her western neighbours might not divert her interests towards the Far East to an extent which British statesmen could not view without some misgivings. The more Russia is made a European rather than an Asiatic Power, the better for everybody.

I therefore conclude that the solution of the Polish question which would best suit our interests would be the constitution of a Poland endowed with a large measure of autonomy, while remaining an integral part of the Russian Empire—the new State or province to include not only all Russian Poland, but also Austria's and (part at least of) Prussia's share in the plunder of the ancient kingdom.

That was Mr. Balfour's view before the Russian revolution, but I am not sure that it would not still be his view to-day.

* * *

Last week an admirable article in this journal called *In Dubious Battle* discussed American isolationism before Pearl Harbour. A friend of mine, who was much concerned in this controversy, points out that the "all help short of war" attitude of the Committee to Defend America was not the nearest the United States got to intervention. On the contrary the "Fight for Freedom" organisation took the jibe of warmongering and made a virtue of it, saying on innumerable platforms that "By fight, we mean fight," and arguing that America's hope of salvation depended on voluntarily deciding to go into the war on principle, and not on waiting until Japan or Germany pulled her in. The organisation began to meet weekly at the Century Club in New York in May, 1940, and built up a national organisation, with branches in most of the States.

* * *

Someone told me the other day that rabbits were unobtainable. I wish those who like rabbits (our odd way of expressing a desire to eat them) would pay my cottage a visit and take guns with them. This fervent prayer for company in the solitude of the country is due not to sociability, but to fury that an orchard (my only orchard) of little Cox's Orange and other apples is ruined by these reputedly extinct rodents. Snow has driven all the rabbits in Essex (or so I suppose) into this orchard, and, though every tree is neatly protected by wire netting, the enterprising creatures, no doubt to escape starvation in a pitilessly white world, have actually climbed up the netting and eaten the bark off the stems and boughs of the trees, working systematically down the rows. I don't know whether the trees will die or have to sprout again from the bottom; in any case the result is cruel and my first personal experience of the miseries of farming.

* * *

When men discuss Progress, with a big P, they always make the mistake of talking as if it all happened together or did not happen at all. Actually, moments and bits of improvement coincide with moments and bits of decadence. Just now the problem is to find the bits of improvement and chalk them up. For instance, when I was a child in a market town I used daily to watch, horrified, while men flogged cattle through the streets and stood up in carts so that they could hit their horses harder. To-day most animals are killed with comparatively little barbarity (at any rate with much less barbarity), while horses which have surrendered to the internal combustion engine the privilege of pulling the heaviest loads are treated with the greatest affection and consideration when they do condescend to pull a cart or railway van. It is years since I saw anyone hit a horse. Progress, I said to myself, as I walked up a steep street with a frozen surface by the side of a milkman who was coaxing and helping his horse like an old friend, and cursing the stupidity of those who had failed to sprinkle the road with gravel.

CRITIC

THUNDERER ON THE LEFT

"How can we complain of the attitude of hostile newspapers in the United States when we have here in this country witnessed such a melancholy exhibition as that provided by some of our most time-honoured and responsible journals?

"Our task has been rendered vastly more difficult by a spirit of gay, reckless and unbridled partisanship which has been let loose on the Greek question."—The Prime Minister in the House of Commons.

Two minds with but one thought of old,
  A case of true affinity,
The Thunderer to men foretold
  The mood of the divinity.
But now the partnership presents
  A cleavage categorical,
The prophet from the God dissents,
  The God rebukes the oracle.

The mighty pillar of the State,
  Above the fight since time began,
Becomes the Devil's advocate,
  The Thunderer's a partisan.
  A gay and reckless partisan,
  Unbridled, feckless partisan,
A touched with Trotsky heterodoxy, foolish, mulish partisan.

But has this immemorial guide
  Become a blindfold blunderer?
No, Jove's own bolt is turned aside
  When hurled against the Thunderer.
Outpourings of fanatic heat
  Are nowhere there detectable,
Instead, this grave and reverend sheet
  Makes partisans respectable.

The tempest rolls, the lightnings blaze,
  The contest is Olympian,
The Titans go their separate ways,
  The Thunderer's a partisan.
  A fulminating partisan,
  The culminating partisan,
A still dissentient, independent, unrepentant partisan.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to E. M. Ward.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Our hopeless state of insecurity is strikingly illustrated by two such personalities as Herr Hitler and Sir William Beveridge. Two men who have shown sufficient ability to attain power with such irreconcilable aims as to be a danger to security at any time. Neither of them can be ignored.—*Statist.*

Referring to the coming General Election, Sir Anthony advocated that directors and officials of limited companies should exercise their right to rent a garage or office from their firms, and thus, like directors of private companies, secure an additional vote on the basis of paying rates for the premises acquired.—*Yorkshire Observer.*

You have the opportunity of moulding the future of the meat trade to make it shine like a beacon through the ages. It will be your finest hour.—Speech at the annual conference of the National Federation of Meat Traders' Association.—Reported in *Daily Sketch.*

HISTORY LESSON

It was rather surprising recently to find Professor Turberville suggesting that some children should not be taught history. The aptitude of the young for the understanding of history, "if they possess any at all," he declares must lie in the imagination. Hence, he concludes: "Let those children who are graced with little or none be shielded from the study of history altogether; it will be merely a weariness of the flesh to them and a deplorable waste of the time of both pupil and teacher."

It seems to me that however indifferent many human beings may become to history in later life, most of them are attracted by it in childhood. After all, what is half the Old Testament but history, and what child has ever been bored by the stories in it, from the temptation of Eve to the voyage of Jonah in the big fish? Cinderella and Bluebeard are not more familiar in the memory than Noah and his Ark, or David and the giant. I doubt whether there is any other book from which so many narratives stay in the mind. Some of the narratives, no doubt, we Victorian children found rather shocking. Jacob's theft of his aged father's blessing seemed a scurvy trick, and one would have loathed the man if he had appeared in any book but the Bible. His later position as a patriarch, however, gave him a veneer of moral respectability. And after all something may be forgiven the man who dreamed the dream of the angels on the ladder and who made the coat of many colours for his young son. Abraham was another eminent Hebrew whose conduct was not always, according to Victorian standards, above reproach. It was only with difficulty that we could persuade ourselves he was right in being so ready to slay the boy Isaac and to offer him up as a burnt offering on the mountain. We did not blame him for telling a lie about his wife—a lie that was at least well meaning—but killing a son seemed a dreadful thing to do even under divine instruction.

Whether Moses was right in murdering the Egyptian was another moot point. We had not yet become inured to assassination, and the story did not seem to reflect much credit on Moses. "And he looked this way and that way and when he saw that there was no man he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand." A little on the furtive side, but at least a story that can never be forgotten.

To many people the enjoyment of such stories may seem to be of little help towards an understanding of history. What is the educational value, they may ask, of the story of Elisah setting the two she-bears to tear forty-two children to pieces merely for calling him a bald-head. Well, it may not be so educational as a knowledge of the terms of the Treaty of Amiens, but to a child of seven it is more enticing. History should begin by being largely fabulous, and the more Towers of Babel, and Widow's Cruses, and Golden Calves we have the better. The story of Samson and his magical hair is a better introduction to the history of the Hebrews—which is now also a part of the history of European civilization—than the book of *Leviticus*. I say this under correction, as I have never read the book of *Leviticus*.

How fortunate it is that Roman history begins with the myth of Romulus and Remus and their wolf foster-mother! Here is an animal story that lights up the imagination of the child and whets his appetite for more Roman history—an appetite that does not always perish even on that dull day on which Julius Caesar makes his first appearance as historian with the dull announcement that all Gaul is divided into a certain number of parts. Then comes that admirable man Mucius Scaevola who thrust his right hand into the fire (as we should all have liked to be brave enough to do) and kept it there till it was burnt off, to show his contempt of torture. Roman history, indeed, is a rival of the Old Testament in its profusion of unforgettable stories. I have never met a child who was bored by Horatius Cocles or Coriolanus or the mother of the Gracchi or the geese that saved the Capitol. I am sure the Romans would have won the affection of more school children if only they had not conquered Hannibal. Conquering Hannibal was, in the eyes of many of the young, the unforgivable sin and, as a result, the Romans possess an undeserved reputation as a stupidly successful people. I am myself no longer a Hannibalian, and see no reason for admiring a man extravagantly, merely because he was defeated in war. After all, many scoundrels and nincompoops have been defeated in war.

Even Julius Caesar was not so dull as you might think, when reading as a schoolboy his *De Bello Gallico*, the man who crossed the Rubicon and died with the words "Et tu Brute!" on his lips was as dramatic a figure as even a small boy could ask for in a story book. As for Brutus, is he not the world's pet among assassins? Little girls in the nursery weep over his tragic end and even when scholars tell us that he was nothing like the unselfish hero we read about in Shakespeare we still hold by the Shakespearean view of his character. Much as I respect Brutus as a patriot, however, I cannot acquit him of being unpardonably stupid. To permit Mark Antony to address the multitude after the murder of Caesar was a piece of chivalrous folly beyond anything else in history. As well might Cromwell have allowed the most silver-tongued of his opponents to deliver a funeral oration on King Charles in Whitehall on the day of the execution. It would have been much safer, for Cromwell to do so, indeed, since his followers were at least fanatics and not to be swayed by speech-making. The Roman multitude, on the other hand, seems to have consisted largely of feather-heads ready to be cajoled into applauding any murder, and equally ready to be cajoled into calling for vengeance on the murderers.

When I reflect how little Roman history I ever knew, and how much I enjoyed that little, I feel the strongest objection to closing such a gate of enjoyment against masses of children. As well forbid them to read the *Arabian Nights*. Little Roman history though I knew I at least had the pleasure of seeing many famous figures flashed across the screen from Cincinnatus at his plough to Nero with his fiddle. One can forgive a great many dates of battles and names of laws and consuls for the sake of such noble stories as that of Regulus and such comic stories as that of Caligula. Roman history becomes intolerable to the Jack Horner kind of schoolboy only when it loses itself in the dry sands of what are called Roman antiquities and when a dreadful book called Becker's *Gallus* is recommended to him for study. Becker's *Gallus*, like *Leviticus*, is a book that I have never read, but it has always seemed to me one of the most dryasdust books ever written. One needs imagination, no doubt, to enjoy such a book, or, indeed, to enjoy any book of antiquities in one's 'teens; and my imagination waned at the very ABC of the subject. This is certainly a part of history which I think most of the young should be spared.

English history does not begin so fabulously as Roman; but it is enlivening at the outset to learn how the original inhabitants of England painted themselves with woad. A sceptic has maintained that when the Romans first arrived they were misled into believing that the Britons painted themselves with woad by the fact that they were blue with the cold of their native island. I prefer to keep to the established fables of history, however, and I should be as sorry to part with the ancient Briton's woad as with Boadicea in her chariot with scythes lashed to the wheels. I was all the more shocked, on opening John Richard Green's *Short History* the other day to find not a word about either woad or Boadicea. Green is obviously not a historian for the young. For him English history begins with the landing of Hengist and Horsa in 449. "It is," he says, "with the landing of Hengist and his war band at Ebbisfleet on the shores of the Isle of Thanet that English history begins. No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen as that which first felt the tread of English feet."

I wonder how many Englishmen have the feeling of being in the presence of something sacred when they are shown the spot where Hengist landed. I doubt whether the ordinary Englishman would go a mile out of his way to see it. I never met an Englishman who exhibited any particular pride in his country's association with Hengist and Horsa. Hengist and Horsa are less real to the modern Englishman than the Flotsam and Jetsam of the B.B.C., and anything he knows about them is not to their credit. They seem to have been pirates with a special genius for massacre and even Green paints such a picture of them as might have been included in Lord Vansittart's *Black Record*. "It was in vain," he writes, "that some [of the Britons] sought shelter within the walls of their churches: for the rage of the English seems to have burned fiercest against the clergy. The priests were slain at the altar, the churches fired, the peasants driven by the flames to fling themselves on a ring of pitiless steel." Few English schoolboys are likely to have their imaginations fired by being told that "the extermination of the Briton was but the prelude to the settlement of his conquerors. What strikes us at once in the new England is that it was the one purely German nation that rose upon the wreck of Rome." How much more pleasant it is for the English boy to trace the history of his country back to Cassivelaunus and Caractacus than to think of Hengist and Horsa as the Romulus and Remus of his nation! The truth is Hengist and Horsa are, at best, mere skeletons in the English nation's cupboard.

Hence I should say to the teachers of English history "Stick to woad and Boadicea, and Alfred and the Cakes, and Canute ordering the tide to go back, and the king who never smiled again, and the Princes in the Tower, and Henry VIII's wives, and Drake and the game of bowls, and Jenkins's Ear, and 'Up Guards and at 'em'." It is by such means that the young learn, as it were, to swim in history; and some of them may ultimately even come to an understanding of it. Which is more than some of the historians themselves do. At least so say some of the other historians.

Y. Y.

UNCLE VANYA

Last week *Uncle Vanya* went into the Old Vic Repertory at The New Theatre. It is an enjoyable performance; Chehov is the most popular of foreign dramatists to-day; it will draw. It has noteworthy merits though not a few defects. Of these some, at any rate, could be remedied. One of the advantages of the repertory system is that blemishes need not become stereotyped by perpetual repetition; in the intervals of performance actors and producer have time to discuss together episodes and gestures which did not seem to carry weight.

There are passages of remarkably good acting throughout this production. Certainly I have never seen two of the minor parts played nearly as well; Marina (the family nurse) and the Professor. Dame Sybil's performance is quite perfect. For the first time we were made truly aware of the contribution which this calm little melodic part makes to the symphonic whole (it is not affected to speak of Chehov's dramatic construction in terms of music), and Mr. Harcourt Williams not only acted admirably the peevish self-importance of the old invalid, but succeeded also in suggesting the imposing plausibility of that ancient aesthetic gasbag. I have seen four performances of the play, but never before a Professor who made it easy to take for granted that he had been able to enslave two beautiful young women and win the awed devotion of the critical Vanya in his youth. But when Mr. Harcourt Williams rose like a statesman to address the family gathering, resplendent in velvet waistcoat and chains as if he were already back in Petersburg, his ailments forgotten, mellifluously moderate in stating his preposterous demands, swinging his *pince-nez*, and now and then lifting his well-groomed beard, then indeed could one credit the

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venerable vampire with past triumphs and his bogus reputation.

Never has this scene been as well played in my recollection. Watch an already shattered Vanya (has he not just surprised his adored Yelena in the arms of Astrov?), writhing with exasperation in his chair, clutching ears that can hardly credit the effrontery of the Professor's proposal that the estate should be sold for his benefit. Watch how well Mr. Ralph Richardson's acting leads up to Vanya's outburst which scatters the family and to his final hysterical cry, "Now I know what must be done," as he rushes from the room. When, after the off-stage shot, the Professor re-enters, eyes goggling, coat-tails flying, I wanted him to display an even more extravagant agility. (Jump, Mr. Harcourt Williams, leap in the air with windmill arms!); and when the unhappy Vanya, after firing his second shot, collapses, a little longer pause of speechless sobbing would, by suggesting that he is perhaps overwhelmed by remorse, heighten still more the effect of those words which bring down the curtain and the house: "Missed him *again*!"

When I saw the first English performance of *Uncle Vanya* in 1911, I remember writing about this climax (the last act is a doleful diminuendo with "They've gone," "They've gone" recurring like a musical phrase in different keys) and saying of it that it hits us between wind and water. Oh, the futility of it! It is the climax of all the amiable ineffectualness which Chehov has been carefully delineating with such subtle touches in his characters, whose predicaments provoke our laughter and tears, ridicule and sympathy. Besides inventing the Play Without Plot or theatrical effects, which, supported by the genius of Stanislavsky and his Moscow Art Theatre company, led to a new kind of stage performance; besides developing, though he did not, of course, invent, the short-story which is all situation and no drama, Chehov was also the poet and apologist of ineffectualness. Here Turgenev was in some measure a predecessor; but while readers of *Fathers and Sons* and *On the Eve* can be in no doubt about the author's admiration for Bazarov and Insarov, both men of action, what strikes us about Chehov is that his understanding and sympathy invariably go out to the irresolute and feeble, and to them alone. He can't stand the successful. Recall Lopakhin in *The Cherry Orchard*. There is not much the matter with that self-made peasant, yet he appears odious in comparison with the effete landowners and their gentle parasites.

Prince D. S. Mirsky hit the mark when he wrote that the spirit of Chehov's work was a Cult of Inefficiency in which halos are given to the defeated. Once when he asked me what the post-treaty civil war in Ireland was about, and I told him it was a struggle between the active saints and blackguards on the one side and quiet, decent, sensible people on the other (a description which possibly fits the situation in Greece to-day), he replied "I'm always on the side of the active saints and blackguards." We did not agree, but he was one of the best critics I ever talked with. This Chehovian cult of inefficiency was supposed in those days to be peculiarly Russian—nonsense, of course. Mirsky pointed out that *Eminent Victorians* was full of it. Recall, he said, the contrast between the unsympathetic statesmanlike Manning and the lovable unpractical Newman, and, he might have added, look how much Strachey's dislike of Florence Nightingale's ruthless efficiency lessens his admiration. As for Henry James, "the better sort" in his stories are almost invariably failures, so are the amiable characters in Hardy's. Yes, there was every reason why Chehov should be understood and admired abroad. And even at this moment when inefficiency is the last quality anybody wants to encourage, the hearts of English people are touched by his helpless characters. And that brings me back to the acting.

Mr. Ralph Richardson's Vanya was in several respects quite the best I have seen, and perhaps partly because he happened to resemble closely one of my Russian friends, he struck me as more like a Russian than other Vanyas. Yet I also think there is truth in my colleague James Agate's contention that his physical appearance suggests too much energy and resilience, however well he acts. He is utterly dejected and acts misery well, but you feel with his big, strong, enjoying body and open receptive countenance, such a man will soon recover. The neurotic sensibility of Vanya is absent. I have one suggestion which may help. In wooing Yelena he should be more timid and spaniel-like in his, to her, irritating adoration. He should never dare to clutch her arm and pull her towards him. Vanya is erotically diffident and idealistic without the smallest confidence in his own attractions or merits.

Miss Margaret Leighton's intonations and movements as Yelena were too much those of an actress consciously *acting* a part, as though she were deliberately illustrating on the stage for us the things said about her, a lazy walk, a mermaid coldness. She did not convey Yelena's utterly bored indifference to what anybody thought of her—except for her little gleam of hope that it might be a rather exciting relief to stimulate the handsome, melancholy Astrov. He is the type often attractive to women, the delapidated self-pitying idealist. Women feel they can save him and enable him to become a noble, useful man. Impossible, of course, but it is tempting to try to turn his Byronic cynicism into burning faith. Mr Laurence Olivier did not give the impression of fundamental weakness needed. I felt his Dr. Astrov would have succeeded in making Yelena come across. Astrov can be bitter and contemptuous but he can't be firm. He is most himself—his best humble self—with the old nurse. He really needs a mother more than a mistress.

Miss Joyce Redman's Sonya transmitted the pathos of that plain affectionate little girl, but once or twice there was a touch of the governess in her tone towards Uncle Vanya. This is wrong, although apart from the old nurse she is the only practical person in the house.

There were too many pauses in the production, some are dramatic, but others are merely naturalistic, and then the audience coughs.

DESMOND MCCARTHY

RADIO NOTES

EVER since broadcasting developed a number of conscious techniques the listening world has been sharply divided into those who like Feature (i.e., dramatised) treatment and those who prefer the "straight" Talk. Roughly speaking, the attendant vice of the Feature is vulgarity, that of the Talk flatness. I am prejudiced in the matter; but once it is admitted that there must be some degree of presentation in even the "purest" talk, the advantages of introducing a stronger element of dramatisation on occasions when the chief object is to make the listener *see* something, is surely patent. It is almost a truism that over-acting on the air is even more embarrassing and less convincing than it is in the theatre, but what many people who dislike radio acting seldom recognise is that even at its most discreet it is bound to seem stagy if the programme is turned on in the middle. The acting voice differs from the natural voice in the same way that stage lighting differs from daylight, and to go from one to the other without adequate preparation is unfair both on the actor and on yourself. Yet this is very frequently done, and producers sometimes aggravate matters—usually in "actuality" features—by mixing amateur voices with those of actors. This is almost always disastrous, especially when one or two actors from the Drama Repertory, with whose voices listeners are familiar, are pushed into a cast of soldiers, merchant seamen, or whatever. There was a rather bad case of this a few weeks ago, in *They Fight with Alexander*, otherwise an extremely good example of topical feature which gave a picture of the fighting in Italy that was, I believe, far more vivid and immediate to the average listener than the most expert talk could have given.

In the past week there have been two features which seemed to me, in different ways, very ably executed: Leonard Cottrell's *Britain's Our Doorstep* (second instalment—Gibraltar to Tunis), and Nesta Pain's historical survey of the fight with *Yellow Fever*. Documentary programmes are often spoilt by the slipping in of false notes and by the dullness which results from inattention to shape, but in these two cases the dovetailing of fact and drama was most successfully achieved. I should be surprised if most listeners did not enjoy both these programmes—and equally surprised if they did enjoy *Europe and Our-*

selves. This was the first of a series of broadcasts in which Barbara Ward, "interrogated by" Adrian Thomas, is supposed to answer the question: What is Europe? On this occasion, however, Miss Ward's reply was continually interrupted by a bewildering *montage* of voices apparently designed to ginger up a straightforward discussion. This method, of giving quasi-dramatic form to what is in effect a series of plain statements, is completely out of date and had, one hoped, been finally killed by *Salute John Bullock*. I trust that Talks, who seem to be responsible for this series, will persuade Mr. Thomas to simplify his technique in the remaining programmes. *Western Approaches*, produced on January 18th, proved less confounding than this hotch-potch, but failed, nevertheless, to be anything like as moving as the film on which it was based. Perhaps it would have been better not to stick so closely to the technique of the film; at all events I could not feel that the elaborate medley of acoustical tricks resulted in a coherent perspective, or that the passages of music did anything but fill in the holes between the sequences. It is faults like these which bring the whole technique of Features into the disrepute it undoubtedly enjoys with the more discriminating type of listener—a disrepute quite undeserved by the more dexterous productions in the genre, and no doubt to some extent aggravated by the horrible word "feature" itself.

The broadcast of Michael Tippett's oratorio, *A Child of Our Time*, greatly enhanced my original impression that it is a work of considerable power and importance. Of course it is uneven: the recitatives are stylistically impossible and dramatically ineffective, and some of the vocal writing in the solos is far from happy; but a work in which beauty and originality are so strongly controlled by sincerity cannot fail to be deeply moving. This performance was a distinct improvement on the first, especially in the orchestral department. Dealing as it does with the dilemma of idealistic youth torn between conflicting loyalties by nationalistic feuds, the oratorio poses one of the central problems of our time. The solution, however, does not lie with art: hence the tragedy inherent in this music.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Rainbow," at the Tatler
"The Battle for the Ukraine," at the Torch
"Winged Victory," at the Tivoli
"Mrs. Parkington," at the Empire

Apart from the documentaries, *Rainbow* is probably the best Russian film of the war. There are traces of the Russian faults. At one moment a hostage held by the Nazis gives utterance to a slogan about the benevolence of Soviet rule when we should expect him to be fearing death or dreaming revenge: it may be that the new kind of peasant behaves so, though I don't believe it. At another moment Nazi soldiers, with huge bandaged feet, goosestep on patrol in a remote Ukrainian village: this not even a Russian would believe. Hard not to brutalise your enemy, to make his troopers into automatic clods, his officers into cunning maniacs, when that enemy has burnt, tortured and shot his way through your villages. The fact remains that, despite his crimes, the Nazi is a human being, and not a caricature. I mention this, the only possibly weak point of *Rainbow*, because it is a good enough film to make one regret any blemish. The Nazis in *Rainbow* aren't, as screen Nazis go, incredible: on the contrary. But the rest of the film attains a high level of tragedy, and tragedy and satire don't mix. There are whole sequences in which the theme of occupation—botched in so many English and American films—achieves its final utterance. The noblest of these is the incident of the ten-year old boy shot by guards while trying to slip food to a hostage. His body is rescued by villagers and brought to his mother's house. The body is laid out on the floor, the mother and children stand round. Where are they to bury him, so that he will still belong to them and the Nazis will find no clue for accusing others? She takes a spade and digs the grave in the living room; then she and the children stamp the earth flat with their feet. Every detail of this long scene—the mother's determined grief, the solemn face of the older child, the infant crying—is beautifully accomplished. "Shut his eyes before we throw on the earth." That brings home the pain; afterwards, the stamping feet are almost intolerable. Physical sensation can sharpen emotion as nothing else can, and the film is peculiarly suited to conveying such stabs at the heart. Elsewhere in *Rainbow* a half-starved woman undergoing cross-examination is given a taste of water; only a taste, then the glass is set on a table where the water, out of reach, is seen swaying. Other scenes are more ruthless, more horrible, but these triumphs of imagination, with which the Russian cinema began, linger indelibly. The story is simple, terrible and convincing: we know it already from countless newspaper paragraphs. Not many dramas about the war can be considered works of art, but *Rainbow* is true both to drama and to fact. It has been produced by Mark Donskoy, the creator of the Gorky trilogy, and its director is E. Perelstein.

That fine documentary on the same subject, Dovshenko's *Battle for the Ukraine*, can be seen again at the little Torch Theatre with the original cuts restored. No more comprehensive or realistic filming of war has ever been made and if anyone still wonders why Russian offensives don't stop halfway he should go and see this film.

Winged Victory from America is another glossy tribute to the fighting men—this time the Army Air Force. Calling up, tests, training, graduation, Christmas in the Pacific. Usual criticism: good material, colossally overdone. The overdoing, this time, is compensated to some extent by admirable photography. (Two hours.)

Mrs. Parkington gives us Greer Garson as one of those disgusting old ladies of ninety beloved by every Hollywood actress who wants to show how she can ham it. This one is like all the others. She has been married, centuries ago, to a brute of a millionaire (Walter Pidgeon), who has the decency to die young—in his fifties, anyway. Whiff of little foxes. How caddish it is to have money, heigh ho! (Two hours plus.)

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Robin of England," at Unity Theatre

No, in spite of the season, this is not pantomime. Jack Lindsay, who is an enthusiast for our popular traditions, has written a straight play about the Robin Hood and the Sherwood Forest we loved as children. In the plot there is nothing not already familiar from the legend, but Mr. Lindsay has given the cast some fine lines to speak, and introduced period songs for them to sing. Naturally, being Unity's, this production is most concerned to show the social conditions that led to bands of homeless men roaming the forests and to peasant revolts. The only preaching, however, is by Friar Tuck—a superbly bibulous unfrocked priest played by Mr. Pearl. Altogether the outlaws—and their women—are a convincing group of runaway labourers. Freda Lazarus, especially, gives an excellent picture of a Cockney wench. Robin (Howard Mann) is more at ease with his band than with Marion (Hazel Wallace) whose stiffness may be due to her virgin pride, but gives one the impression that it is caused by her heavy clothes. Mr. Sarron's sets, as usual, make the most of Unity's small stage. More attention, one feels, should be paid to the rehearsal of the songs which tend to be ragged and flat. And the personal conflicts amongst the outlaws would be more convincing if Mr. Cartland's Little John was made more than a yes-man for Robin. Three or four more performances should give this play the polish it needs to make it a fine beginning to Unity's bigger programme for 1945.

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Correspondence

WHY NOT TRUST THE TORIES?

SIR,—Robert Boothby has replied to Aneurin Bevan's booklet. I don't know what replies other victims may be gestating. But if I were a Tory I should say something like this.

If it is true that our party is plotting to return to power by making grand promises of social reconstruction and then to break them, why do not Socialist and Liberal Ministers expose the plot, instead of, as usually happens on hotly disputed issues, asserting complete unanimity? Why, for example, did Herbert Morrison in the long debate of February 1943 on the Beveridge Plan explicitly defend the Government against the charge of double-crossing and procrastination? Are not such Ministers better placed than outsiders for weighing up their Tory colleagues and smelling out their sinister designs? Seven Socialists and one Liberal are principal Ministers; four of them in departments specially concerned with home affairs (Labour, Home Office, Scotland, Trade). Departments headed by Tories have nearly always a Labour or Liberal Under-Secretary. Are these men traitors to their principles, clinging to office, or are they merely dupes? If either, are they fit for power?

Speaking for myself, as an impartial observer more to the Left than to the Right, I do not "trust the Tories," nor any other party as a party. I believe that most, though probably not all, Ministers and Opposition leaders mean what they say when they say it. But when the time comes to redeem their promises, the pressure of class interests, of inherited prejudices, sometimes of changed circumstances, leads to backsliding and often to betrayals or disastrous timidity. It was so between the wars. Much of what Aneurin Bevan says of that period is, I think, justified. It may happen again. The post-war period is going to be one of appalling difficulty, especially in international affairs. In home affairs the prospect is brighter, and there are splendid possibilities. But are these possibilities more or less likely to be realised if we have a one-party Government? Suppose the Tories gain a majority, would it not be some check on possible betrayals if there were watchdogs for reform and democracy within the Government? Or suppose the Labour Party wins, who have they fitted to succeed Churchill and to stand up to Stalin and Roosevelt on international issues? Frankly, I cannot see that any one party is at present rich enough in men and women of first-rate mental and moral calibre to form a Government qualified to cope with the tremendous problems which will face them. There may be better people outside than inside Parliament, but, frankly again, the visibly outstanding examples of types likely to enter politics, are not very numerous.

Coalitions have their disadvantages. But the need for national unity has reconciled our pugnacious democracy to the necessity during wartime. Is the need likely to be much lessened during the next few years?

ELEANOR M. RATHBONE

House of Commons.

SIR,—It is interesting and amusing to find your prediction that many Tories will read Aneurin Bevan's too brilliant pamphlet so swiftly confirmed. Mr. Boothby's ponderous letter only emphasises, rather tediously, Bevan's very factual analysis of the Tory technique of deception; indeed, fooling the majority of the people all the time is apparently also Mr. Boothby's only explanation of the phenomenon of twentieth-century democracy.

His attempt to whitewash Mr. Churchill's action in 1926 again only emphasises the main issue, that the 1926 strike was the coalminer's reluctant last word to years of frustration and deceit on the part of the coal-owners and the Government. He claims that the Beveridge Report—or 90 per cent. of it—will be implemented by the Tory Party; but, unless there is a different approach to full employment than the flimsy extemporisations contemplated in the White Paper and debunked by Bevan as well as by Beveridge, it will not be implemented. He claims that it is ambitious; of course it isn't, but it is a useful piece of deceit to suppose that it is.

The best answer to his final rhetorical question is on page 4 of the Brief Guide to the Government's Plan of Social Insurance issued by the Minister of Reconstruction. Here are shown pictorially the income groups of the country. Seven million persons are in the "over £250 p.a." group, of which 5½ million fall into the "under £500" group—this corresponds to the bourgeois class—and 18 million are in the "under £250 p.a." group. This corresponds to the Mass of the Dispossessed, whose existence Mr. Boothby at least acknowledges.

Ardingly, Sussex. R. SPICER

SIR,—My letter, as printed, on Aneurin Bevan's pamphlet might give the impression that in my view Lord Baldwin deliberately battered the miners into submission in 1926. I do not think that this was the case. The point I wished to make was that, whereas Churchill had a policy (a reasonable settlement), Baldwin had none.

The result was that the policy of the coalowners prevailed. This was clearly described at the time by Austin Hopkinson, in an article in the *English Review*, as being designed to make it impossible for meddlesome politicians to interfere with the basic industries of the country. It left a legacy of bitterness from which the coal-mining industry has never recovered.

House of Commons. ROBERT BOOTHBY

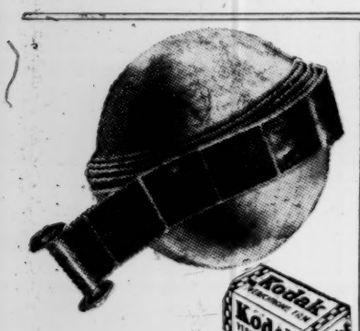
GREECE

SIR,—When taking the House of Commons last week on a conducted tour of the skeletons in the Greek cupboard, the Prime Minister neglected to produce for inspection the two prize specimens, Darlan and Badoglio. From that Allied policy which gave support, and, indeed, a measure of power to these two men, the Greek problem, as it now exists, is immediately derived.

Antecedent causes have been thoroughly debated, with the possible exception of the treatment of Left-wing patriots during the country's gallant struggle with the Italians in 1940. I was not in Greece at the time; but it has been put on record—I think by the novelist Aldridge, who was then a war correspondent—that supporters of the Right-wing took the opportunity offered by war to murder a number of those soldiers with whom they did not agree, preferring their death to a common alliance against the invader. I do not remember any protest by the Prime Minister at that time, but perhaps these murdered fighters for Greek freedom were just a bunch of Trotskyists, in which case, of course, least said, soonest mended.

But that is by the way. The point I wish to make arises from conversations, when I was in Turkey just a year ago, which I had—not always through an interpreter—with a number of those who were regularly escaping from Greece or, at the risk of their lives, going in and out of the country by channels and for reasons best known to themselves.

Without exception they made the point that the granting of co-belligerence to Italy and Allied tenderness for Badoglio and the House of Savoy—their arch enemies—could only lead to trouble in Greece. They reasoned, I think it would be fair to say, thus: "The United Nations, upon no conceivable excuse, treated with Darlan, collaborator and reactionary. (I say, "upon no conceivable excuse," for the fallacy that his appointment had been made to save British and American lives has long been exploded.) They now treat with Badoglio, enemy and reactionary, while at the same time they are blowing their only



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tential Italian allies in a war for freedom, the rkers of the industrial north, into smithereens with eir bombs. They must know that (as one escaped reek diplomat said to me), "if God Almighty were come down from Heaven with rifles in his hands, d, on his bended knees, were to implore the Italians continue the war on whichever side they wished, ey would laugh in his face." Co-belligerence, erefore, is, since it makes no military sense, a political nœuvre whose purpose is to protect the Right. he United Nations are showing a partiality for pre-ely those elements of society which, we had im-ined, this war was being fought to destroy; and must draw the conclusion that, unless we do some-ing about it ourselves, those who have always hated, ared and oppressed us, many of whom now colla-rate with the Germans, will be sure, on the day of eration, of Allied protection and even of support. nd that will be the end of us."

That is a fair summary of the general Greek view. was expressed, from opposite sides, of course, by th Left and Right Greeks who came to Turkey.

It is hardly surprising in the circumstances tha e supporters of the Left Wing should have diverted portion of their attack from the Germans to the reek Tory and Royalist riff-raff for whom we now ow such tenderness. They believed—and whether ght or wrong they were at least logical—that unless ey could hamstring their internal enemies before liberation," they would themselves continue to be rsecuted and oppressed when it occurred.

It ill becomes the Tory riff-raff of Britain to con-mn these tactics, for when, in an inverted sense to sure, the Serbian Mihailovich practised them, ey were lost in admiration. When he decided, hether through wickedness or folly does not matter, at the National Liberation Movement was a more ngerous enemy to his conception of the Yugoslav ate than were the Germans; and thereafter devoted, t a portion, but the whole of his energies to their estruction, he received the plaudits of the Tories ere, even though a moment's thought, had they en capable of it, must have shown them that such course could do nothing but convert him into a erman agent and his wretched Chetniks into German uxiliaries. To the Prime Minister's eternal credit e saw what his Tory supporters failed to see; and e had the wisdom to send Bill Deakin, an objective istorian by profession, out to Yugoslavia to discover e truth. Would that he had sent an equally eminent haracter to Greece. But what is sauce for reactionary ese is apparently, in Tory eyes, not sauce for Left nd Centre ganders.

The Prime Minister is at pains to urge that this country, which has done more for the cause of freedom than all its Allies rolled into one, should not be burdened with all the blame when things go wrong. I hope I have made it as clear as it can be made clear within the compass of a letter, that the initial blame lies equally heavily on all the Allies. We, the British, acquiesced in Darlanism, but we were not primarily responsible for it: equally, perhaps even a trifle more heavily, we are responsible for the nonsensical doctrine of co-belligerence. But the bearer of the blame, like the Godhead, is not one but three.

May I add that when Britain, from one end of the world to the other, ceases to be blamed for the ills of mankind, it will mean that her supreme moral influence, however grudgingly and often unconsciously admitted, will be at an end? And that will be one of the major tragedies of world history. At least, I think so, but then I am a Liberal, and, as such, belong to a body of opinion that, alas, is ceasing to count for very much.

PHILIP JORDAN

FUTURE OF THE AIR

SIR,—The virtual failure of the Chicago Conference in the organisational, as distinct from the technical, field demands some fresh thought on the future of aviation. The vested-interest "realists" are already saying that Chicago has shown what might have been expected—namely, that the type of internationalist approach envisaged in the Canberra agreement and in the Labour Party's "Wings for Peace" was foredoomed to failure.

But this is by no means the last word on the subject. The British proposals at Chicago were themselves a compromise. The White Paper on International Air Transport, on which they were based, was an attempt to bridge the gap between the internationalist policy of Australia and New Zealand, laid down in the Canberra Agreement, and the open competitive, beggar-my-neighbour attitude which the Government anticipated (only too accurately) would be U.S.A.'s contribution to the Chicago Conference. It was that attempt—the attempt to oppose an extreme view with a timid compromise—which was foredoomed to failure, and there seems to be no reason why we should not go back to our starting-point.

The Americas are not essential to an international air service. In 1938, the Europe-Africa-Asia-Australasia land-block accounted for over 76 per cent. of the world's air route miles and for over 57 per cent. of the aircraft miles flown. (This computation is the most accurate that can be made on the data available: it includes a number of insignificant approximations.) This area included nearly all the world's Great Air Powers (which are not the same as the Great Powers: the largest volume of air freight traffic was in New Guinea!) The possibility of getting agreement over this wide field, to internationalise at least the main trunk routes will certainly be supported not only by the Antipodes Dominions, but also by France—always internationalist in its approach to the air—and could not be opposed by Germany or Italy: it seems to depend on little more than approval of the Soviet Union.

That approval might well be forthcoming, for a number of reasons. First, both the Anglo-Soviet and the Franco-Soviet treaties will induce some predisposition towards it. Secondly, the fact that there would still be plenty of room for a large-scale system even without the Soviet Union might make the Russians unwilling to stay out. Undoubtedly they stayed away from Chicago because they, too, realised that the Americans are in a tail-twisting mood, and because they were unwilling to add a Bear to the Lion who is the regular victim. They were, in fact, not disposed to sit at a conference with another Government which they could not meet, in this field, on terms of equality. This would not happen in a conference from which the Governments of the Americas were (voluntary) absentees.

There is a general fear that the Americans might withhold the supply of aircraft from competing nations. I am not sure that this contention is sound; and it is still more doubtful whether they would refuse to supply aircraft to a large international corporation. Business is business, not politics—and the airline operators of the New World will be a totally insufficient market for the aircraft factories of the U.S.A., even when many of them have been reconverted.

All these factors support the view that an internationalised service in the Old World may not be beyond the possibility of achievement, and would almost certainly be successful—perhaps so successful, in fact, that the business-like Americans would not want to stay out of it for long, especially if one or two of the South American republics knocked at the door first. International Airways for the Old World may lead to International Airways for the whole world.

IAN MIKARDO

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CAR DESIGN

SIR,—As one who has studied the question of the future trend of car design and read the remarks in your columns, I would venture to suggest the question of garage space would present a problem with the sale of bigger cars to the mass buyer.

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JONATHAN CAPE

It would require a much bigger space to "house" it than exists at present, at the homes of many thousands of its potential market. When, through the columns of the *Motor* and the *Autocar* in pre-war days I raised the question, it brought back answers from builders, surveyors, and other people in that industry, to the effect that land values were involved and if they designed and built houses on new estates it would enhance the cost of the house and garage to such an extent that it would cause an economic problem to the purchaser.

Having been in most of the principal car producing plants in Europe and America, in addition to the experience of having sold hundreds of cars to all types of buyers, I feel that a mass-produced car which is going to sell readily and provide big production figures, must appeal to the small man motorist, which includes thousands of workers.

Undoubtedly, bigger cars with higher braking efficiency make for greater safety in motoring, but unfortunately the depreciation factor which was high on big h.p. and bodied cars in pre-war days, was linked up with the problem of the mass buyer being forced to confine his used car purchases to the small 8 to 10 h.p. class.

Various committee members of the M.A.A. and S.M.M. & T., to which I belong, have also concurred in these views. The whole planning of housing estates would have to be altered if the working man is to own a car suitable for export. Another rather important item is the fact that many thousands of American cars sold on the world's market are invoiced at cost price. The huge home market of several millions carrying the profit and overheads, the export trade providing an outlet for surplus production. This I confirmed when in U.S.A.

It is interesting to note that Congress in the United States has just authorised the appropriation of £1,500 million in Federal aid for the highway programmes of the States over three successive post-war years. This means that the Federal Government will spend £500 million a year on roads and receive nothing in taxation either from motor cars or petrol. An astonishing contrast to the actions of the British Government. Surely it is desirable for anyone who so wishes, to be able to own a car produced in large volume at a reasonable cost, particularly if it is going to provide revenue and constant employment.

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NEWS FROM YUGOSLAVIA

SIR,—The very different British interpretations of recent developments in Yugoslavia seem due not only to the particular political predilections of the interpreters, but also to their lack of information as to what and why things are happening there. The absence of *reliable* news from that country makes this understandable. To-day, there is *not one single* British or American newspaper correspondent in Belgrade. The few correspondents who were there some weeks ago found (or their editors at home found for them) that there was no "free copy" in that country, only "official guidance." In consequence, they were withdrawn.

The British public therefore obtains only such information as the one-sourced Free Yugoslavia Radio and Tanjug Agency cares to give them. This may satisfy some people, but it is surely no sound basis for accurate judgment on Yugoslav affairs to-day. In order, for example, to judge aright the Tito-Subacic Agreement (together with the Moscow Amendment) it is necessary to know the real strength of the Tito Movement, its application to the ideas of democracy, its totalitarian claims for the Communist Party, etc.

It might be a help to understanding if the speeches made at the Belgrade Skupstina, end of November–early December last year, were known to your readers. They are to be found in *Politika*, copies of which have already reached this country.

Your space is limited, Sir, but may I make another suggestion. A British Delegation is being sent to Greece, why not send one to Yugoslavia also? The British public has a right to know what is going on there, especially as it may some day have to pay for present decisions.

INQUIRER

[The authoritative account of the situation in Yugoslavia given by the two articles we are publishing by Mr. Pribichevich will go, we hope, some way towards answering our correspondent's complaint. We have asked Mr. Pribichevich, who left Belgrade at the end of December last, about the position of correspondents and censorship there. He replies that Tito had invited press representatives to Yugoslavia as early as the summer of 1943. The first response on the part of the Anglo-American pool of correspondents was the arrival of two British and two American correspondents and photographers in May, 1944. All four were captured by the Germans; Mr. Pribichevich was alone lucky enough to escape. Mr. Pribichevich is able to state that neither he nor Mr. Talbot of *Reuters* with whom he worked (Mr. Talbot is now in a German camp) were ever asked to submit any despatch to censorship, which in fact began only after the arrival of a dozen Anglo-American correspondents in Belgrade in the autumn. One of these was expelled for smuggling a despatch to Rome as a private letter to a British officer. The other correspondents have now left, mainly, we gather, because of the difficulty of obtaining rapid communication with their newspapers. This is the result of the arrangement by which all news from Yugoslavia has to be sent by airmail to Bari, where a second Anglo-American censorship takes place.—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

BRITAIN'S BLACK MARKET

SIR,—Your article under the above heading, in your issue of January 20th, is balanced and fair, but there is one sentence which, if taken out of its context, is capable of misinterpretation. Your last paragraph begins with the sentence "that Jews figure largely in some sections of the Black Market is not to be denied, nor is it a phenomenon discrepant with obvious probability." This statement gives the impression, in spite of the qualifying sentences that follow, that Jews figure in the Black Market to a larger extent than the rest of the population.

No statistics are more difficult to obtain but such painstaking investigations as have been possible have shown that the proportion of Jews concerned in the Black Market is no higher than non-Jews, in spite of the fact that their proportion in industry and trade is considerably higher compared to their proportion in the general population.

Certain organs of the press, to whose general impartiality I pay tribute, seem to give undue prominence to foreign-sounding names, and it is also true that such names strike the readers' eye and remain in their memory. But the Jewish community is no more responsible for the Black Market than any other section. Such a phenomenon has always been found, throughout the ages, when goods are in short supply, and it cannot be too strongly emphasised that the Black Market flourishes to an extraordinary extent in all Nazi occupied countries, where the only surviving Jews are to be found in concentration camps.

SIDNEY SALOMON,
Press Officer
The Board of Deputies of
British Jews

Woburn House,
London, W.C.1.

[Our statement that "prosecutions are bound to reveal a preponderance of Jewish names" needed elaboration. In fact—and we have seen the authentic figures—the proportion of Jews prosecuted reveals that in this matter Jews are neither better nor worse than Gentiles, and that the belief that there is a preponderant number of Jewish offenders is due to the natural tendency of reporters to mention the Jewish names because they make news. We should add that the majority of offenders in the food trade are undoubtedly farmers and that for a variety of reasons they are never prosecuted at all.—Ed. "*N.S. & N.*"]

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DENT

BOOKS IN GENERAL

WHEN we take up a book of the 18th century, d especially of the first 50 years, we do not, think, expect to be moved. That literature pears to address itself to our interests, our culties and our consideration, rather than to r hearts. But when the first colourings of sen- ility are diffused over the elegant, social com- exion, when the stiff world of Chesterfield aks, cracks and crumbles into its bath chair d is succeeded by the world of Rousseau, we lise that a cause for profound emotion was ways there. Sensibility has merely made more parent the underlying idea that had directed the nners, the satirists and the formal analysts of heart for 100 years. I mean the idea of the fficiency of man in himself. All the wickedness, the follies, all the marvels, all the prospects re enclosed in him when he was the despair of moralists. The words "man" and "man- d" convey a feeling, in the literature of the th century, which is unsullied by qualification. is not industrial man, economic man, evolu- nary man, civilised man or mass man. He is nply himself, an ordained marvel, a tree grow- in a garden. Inconstancy, vice and levity may his fatal habits; but so are generosity, the noble d useful virtues. Even Swift loves plain John, ter and Thomas. The name of Candide is lf a commendation. The ferocity of satire is lanced by a trite, complacent but altogether ndid pleasure in the newly discovered species. warm before such a sanguine and well- ganised conception of human nature, and half present miseries seem to date from the dissi- ion of it.

The 18th century allowed for all kinds of aracter. It enjoyed their various developments. eccentrics grew like cultivated blooms for all admire; and its cranks could always rely on the soms if not on the advocacy of their friends. e crank with his misanthropy was specially arded with the respect and affection that a turalist has for every item of the species; and t scornful intolerance of cranks which is the aracteristic of our dull-hearted, commercial iety, was unknown to the men of that time. ere is no better example than the modest and rancing case of Mr. Day. He is a crank who the guide to all cranks. The strange result the grafting of a sprig of Rousseau on to one those awkward and unbendable stems of glish character, Mr. Day put out his own uliar blossom. The author of *Sandford and erton* is one of those minor domestic masters ose influence goes far beyond their own time. A hundred years after his death, Day was a torian best-seller who shared with the author *The Fairchild Family* the task of improving minds of Victorian children. To-day he is a iod piece. He ought to be much more than t. I do not see why any modern child should bored by *Sandford and Merton*, for the mix- e is ingeniously concocted. I urge our con- porary cranks to consider this book as a del. For our educational entertainment lacks coherence which a rebellious and humane ilosophy gave to the work of Day; it is educa- n in a void. The neo-Rousseauism—if that is correct cacology—of modern education cries t for its *Sandford and Merton*.

Day's private difficulty, as is well known, was t the sufficiency of man, but the insufficiency woman. Mr. Day was a perfectionist; and en that doctrine is applied to a consideration the opposite sex, it turns upside down and comes an ever more minute inquiry into the perfections of female character. But perfec- nism is a malady of the logical mind, and the nale, notoriously, has not any use for that. The sceptible Mr. Day had either to take what he uld get, like the common run of men or—the ic is unanswerable—to construct his own wife m the blue prints, in advance. Admirable mind the 18th century: he chose the second course!

The story has often been written; but it is seen at its best in the delightful memoirs of Richard Edgeworth, Maria Edgeworth's father. Here we see not only Day, but his foil. We see theory turn into comedy; but it is not cold comedy. It is warmed by the century's love of human beings and by its special regard for friendship. One man is the making of the other. The ingenious Mr. Day, the exemplary Mr. Day, the Mr. Day who talked like a book, the clumsy, greasy-haired, pocked and brilliant Mr. Day, who despised the polite conventions, who scowled all day over his scruples and was—in an age devoted to the appearance of a good masculine leg—hopelessly knock-kneed, this Mr. Day is a shadow without the generous, amorous, hot-tempered Irish country gentleman who always found his passions growing stronger and his scruples growing fewer. It appalled Mr. Edgeworth to see his friend hoping to get a wife by denouncing the ignorance, disobedience, vanity and silliness of women to their faces. No doubt Mr. Edgeworth himself believed in docility and obedience, but he was not so undiplomatic as to draw up a plan of conjugal discipline and get it initialled line by line in advance. He was always overwhelmed by female beauty—the thing he could not stand was domestic lamentation—and all four marriages, except the first, which had been a lamenting one, seem to confirm the soundness of his judgment. Its soundness lay in the fact that he liked women. Mr. Day, for all his susceptibility, obviously did not.

In this, as in other respects, the two men are examples of the eupeptic and the dyspeptic schools of experiment. Outside of love and the education of children, Richard Edgeworth's experiments were practical. He was an incurable inventor of contraptions—one-wheeled coaches, patent turnip cutters, railway lines, interlocking carriages, telegraphs, patent tips and loading devices—a notable forerunner of the great race of British engineers. He was a man of ripe practical resource. Day's experiments were theoretical and political. His theories were the product of an idle rather than an active nature. He would sooner read a book on housing than address a carpenter. He was a philosopher and philanthropist. One can see that a love of mischief, which was part of his ingenious temperament, must have directed Edgeworth's affection for Day. Edgeworth, who had defied his wife and neighbours, and who tried to bring up his son *à la* Rousseau, was delighted when Day tried his famous experiment with the two orphan girls. Properly trained and conditioned, isolated from contamination by the female taste for finery and folly, either Lucretia or Sabrina was expected to grow up to be a suitable wife for the philosopher; for the errors of life were only due to stupidity and the acquisition of bad habits, not to invincible wickedness. Alas! Day, who dismissed original sin, had not reckoned with original dullness: Lucretia, the quarrelsome one, had to be married to a draper. Sabrina looked more hopeful, and she certainly tried hard to look like the design in the philosopher's blue print. But it could not be concealed that she disliked reading. She could not bear science. She could not keep a secret. And she had no control over her emotions. This was proved scientifically by Day when he fired pistols close to her ears and at her petticoats. She simply screamed. Even worse, it was discovered she was buying hats.

But Day's famous experiment was simply an episode in a long search for the right partner. With knapsack on his back he had set out on foot years before to range the West Country. One failure followed another. It was noticed that, though temporarily downcast, he quickly revived. His requirements—we may suppose—were a form of self-protection. At one time Edgeworth took him in hand with some violence. Elizabeth Sneyd, who was Edgeworth's sister-in-law and who, years later, became his wife, agreed to consider Mr. Day if he would polish himself; in other words, if he would go back on all his principles. The desperate man agreed. There is a wonderful scene in the house of the dancing master at Lyons, where Edgeworth took him. Day did nothing by halves. He had his lank black hair shaved off—and a fantastic horse-hair wig was piled on his head. He dressed himself in the latest Parisian clothes. He powdered and he scented. He was tutored by dancing masters. And then, in order to get his legs straightened, he stood for hours every day with his legs held between two boards which were screwed tight so that he could hardly bend or straighten. It was no good. The knees still knocked. "I could not help pitying my philosophic friend," says Richard Edgeworth, "pent up in durance vile for hours together, with his feet in the stocks, a book in his hand and contempt in his heart." He returned to England, but when Elizabeth Sneyd saw the Puritan Malvolio she collapsed with laughter, and that was the end of that.

Day had loved both the Sneyd sisters; but it was Edgeworth who successively married them. Day felt no resentment. And, at last, he found a lady only too glad to sacrifice herself to his programme. It was seen with wonder by all who knew him, and who laughed at his foibles and misadventures, that the exemplary Mr. Day was that rarest of beings—a good man. No hand with the ladies, a tiresome neighbour, but not a bore. Far from it. Alive and humane, he was the brilliant crank, and he resumed in his activity the passionate and generous political strains of his time. He took the colonial side in the American Civil War; he fought for the abolition of slavery; he was pretty well a republican, and *Sandford and Merton* is filled with little quasi-political dialogues of a radical kind. Like Edgeworth, his friend, he was half-way into the 19th century long before his time. He was a forerunner of the philanthropists. I do not propose to say anything now about the delightful pages of *Sandford and Merton* or the ingenious and original interweaving of moral argument, story and instruction, but I hope to return to them. They have not been surpassed, and the two little boys are the most delightful prigs in a literature which ought to be priggish. Why has the method of *Sandford and Merton* never been emulated? I can only think that it is because the peculiar feeling for man and also for the child, which were the late 18th century's great service to the modern world, was a revolutionary and political one. Indirectly, at several removes, and in a philosophical sense, *Sandford and Merton* is a political book. It is wily in its amusement. V. S. PRITCHETT

PERSUASION

Rhetoric and English Composition. By SIR HERBERT GRIERSON. *Oliver and Boyd.* 6*s.*

Sir Herbert begins with Aristotle: rhetoric is "the faculty of discovering all the means of persuasion in any subject"; and then offers his own definition of rhetoric as "the study of how to express oneself most correctly and effectively, bearing in mind the nature of the language we use, the subject we are speaking or writing about, the kind of audience (often only vaguely definable) we have in view, and the purpose, which last is the main determinant."

The lectures, on which his new book is based, were intended to guide students in the practice as well as in the criticism of rhetoric. He quotes Mr. Dover Wilson: "Our university departments of English are in the main departments for the training of literary critics, and pay far too little attention to the student's own power of expression." This is not very happily put, for the first step in training a literary critic should be to teach the power of expression. But it is a dismal truth that graduates of the English School can have taken a First without having learnt to write the tongue they have studied elegantly or even grammatically. If examiners would allot fewer marks to information about Lydgate or Kyd, and more to command of rhetoric, they would confer a great benefit on young writers—as well as on

middle-aged editors and publishers, who find themselves obliged to furnish the tuition that the Universities have neglected. (Should not the student of English be trained to write Dryden or Macaulay as skilfully as a classical scholar writes Aristophanes or Tacitus?). Writing, like singing and dancing, is an art of which many elements can be taught. Indeed a self-respecting writer never ceases teaching himself, for he becomes ever more fastidious in the criticism of his own work. Sir Herbert's new book can therefore be commended not only to the apprentice but to the old hand. And, I would add, to the intelligent reader—since his pleasure in being "persuaded" by a book grows with his understanding of the means that serve to persuade him.

The scope of *Rhetoric and English Composition* is indicated by the eight chapter-headings: "Rhetoric in the Ancient World," "Aristotle," "The Point of View," "The Choice of Words," "Figurative Language," "The Diction of Poetry," "Construction—the Sentence," "Construction—the Paragraph," and "The Whole Composition." Each of these chapters is packed with wise comment and apt illustration. I wish he had given us a chapter on euphony, on which he hardly touches, though one of the most obstinate difficulties of writing English is to avoid the accumulation of certain word-endings. (The first sentence of Sir Herbert's book ends: "an appeal to the emotions, a certain elevation of style, and a construction, an ordering, which leads roughly from an exordium to a peroration." If he were brought this in a student's essay, would he not suggest "At least one word in 'tion' too many"?)

Throughout the book the reader who cares for language will find himself stimulated and instructed. Sir Herbert is anything but pedantic: indeed, sometimes he may carry indulgence too far, as when he seems to condone the use of "avocation" to mean "vocation"—a use that besides being etymologically absurd deprives us of a valuable term which has no synonym. On the other hand, he is too absolute, I suggest, in his damnation of the word "commence." This can nicely be used to mean not "begin" but "begin to be"—e.g. "He first commenced physician at Northampton" (Dr. Johnson). Sir Herbert is more indulgent than Mr. Fowler to faults of "number." Mixed metaphors? He justly says that "intensity of feeling and a rapid flow of ideas will often produce a huddle of images, which, if not logically consistent, are very effective," adducing this instance:

> Shakespeare says "to take arms against a sea of troubles," and the effect would only be weakened by changing "sea" to "host" for the sake of consistency.

But is this a mixed metaphor? Does it not offer a consistent image of a man charging the waves with sword or pike? An image not only picturesque but exact, since such an attack upon the sea is more certainly suicidal than an attack upon a host.

It is a principal merit of Sir Herbert's book to keep raising such interesting points. Thus we are offered a fourfold division of styles—the plain, the decorated, the grand and the scientific. And in describing the decorated style of a Jeremy Taylor, a Ruskin or a Pater, he calls it "a heightening and embellishing of a subject which the writer cannot or does not trust altogether to make its own appeal." At once this sets us thinking. The subjects of such writers—the beatitude of Heaven or a sunset over the lagoon or the water-music in Giorgione's landscapes—surely they make their own puissant appeal, but neither they nor the emotion they excite in the author can be made present to the reader except by the impact of a decorated style.

In his chapter on the diction of poetry Sir Herbert quotes Aristotle's commendation of compound words composed of two "significant" (that is concrete) words, and illustrates aptly with Spenser's "sea-shouldering whales." Here again the reader is seduced for an instant to follow his own thoughts, to wonder how far the greater richness of texture found in Greek and English poetry, when compared with Latin and French, may be due to this linguistic advantage.

One more instance:

> Some words have proved very difficult for poets, e.g. "moustache" or "whiskers." You find Spenser accordingly writing:
>
> And his sweet lips, on which before that stound
> The bud of youth to blossom fair began,
>
> and Tennyson later speaks of:
>
> The knightly growth that fringed his lip.

Such a remark is just what one wants to drive one to the dictionary. The O.E.D. gives two verse quotations (*The Jew of Malta* and *Arden of Feversham*) for "moustache"—in the forms "muschatoes" and "mutchado"; and none for "whiskers" (which appears, however, in the not highly poetic *Hudibras*); but offers a "whisker'd" from *The Task*. Rubens and Velasquez depicted moustaches, Veronese embellished Alexander with whiskers—why should the poets enjoy less liberty, especially as they are free to clap a beard on whom they will? It may be because the word "moustache" was not properly naturalised till the wearing of moustaches became unfashionable. But this is not very convincing, nor does it apply to whiskers. Both types of face-decoration are artificial, since they entail shaving of other surfaces. But then the word "razor" can be used in the most sublime poetry. I see no light, and wish that some scholar would make a study of the words that thus mysteriously refuse to be ennobled.

Sir Herbert offers a definition of comedy:

> In the comic story, of which the dominant interest is the story, you are shown some character or characters who in one way or another awaken your contempt, dislike, or it may be hatred, and you witness their overthrow, see them exposed and defeated—Big Claus defeated by Little Claus.

This contrasts neatly with the usual definition of tragedy, and fits to perfection the comedies of Molière and Ben Jonson. But English comedy has commonly been less ferocious, and many of its greatest figures inspire the reverse of contempt, dislike and hatred. Evidently the "story" of *The Importance of Being Earnest* is not its dominant interest, but the sympathy with which Jack is treated is, I suggest, characteristic of the English comic spirit. A French writer would have pilloried him as a hypocrite. From Falstaff, Millamant, yes, and even Mr. Horner to Mr. Woodhouse, Mr. Pickwick and Kipps, how high a proportion of English comic characters excite sympathy or at least indulgence! So much so that, when Falstaff is "overthrown and defeated," we are not satisfied but dismayed.

I have picked from Sir Herbert's book a number of remarks that stimulate discussion. Good criticism, like good talk, must include some material for disagreement or at least for further thought. But most of this book is straightforward, instructive, uncontroversial and practical—how valuable, for instance, his chapter on the Paragraph! The mere Southron may not share his enthusiasm for the style in the excerpts from Carlyle and Stevenson, may indeed be baffled when he selects for particular praise the simile "wintle like a saumont-coble." (A friend of mine declared that Portuguese was easier to learn as well as more rewarding than Scots.) One is conscious that a full life of thought and scholarship is behind this book. No writer could attend to it without learning something further about his trade, no reader without gaining a deeper understanding of the reasons for his enjoyment of the "unpunished vice." Let me end with one more quotation:

> The "pleasure" which imaginative literature aims at providing includes something which is not on a lower scale than conduct—which is the concern of the best didactic and oratorical writing—but something to which both philosophy and theology have assigned the highest place of all, namely contemplation, the impassioned vision of the worth of things. Poetry has often taken its rise from a practical purpose, *e.g.* Lucretius' great poem, but its final value as poetry does not depend on any practical effect it may achieve, but on its revelation of emotional truth, of what we call value.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A POETIC TRIBUTE

Robert Bridges (1844–1930). By EDWARD THOMPSON. *Oxford University Press.* 7s. 6d.

This book is a worthy tribute to Bridges by a fellow poet and friend. It is beautifully written, provides a helpful survey of Bridges' work and many anecdotes of his life. It relates his achievements at various stages of his development to each other, judging, quite correctly, that certain years in Bridges are vintage years, whereas others are not so good. In fact, Mr. Thompson's skilful essay resembles one of those Prefaces containing the poet's *Life and Character* which are to be found in Collected Works published in the Eighteenth Century.

To many readers it will appear, though, that there is a problem connected with Bridges which Mr. Thompson does not touch on. It is necessary to state what Mr. Thompson's view is, in order to decide whether this problem is real or only the result of misunderstandings. It is this: Bridges was a poet who devoted his life almost exclusively to the writing of poetry, and he produced some of the most perfect poems in the language and one great philosophic poem, *The Testament of Beauty*. It is true that some of Bridges' poems are less good than others, but, on the whole, his work contains less dross than that of other poets. His own character and his single-minded devotion to his craft were suited to his work. The poet had certain eccentricities of character, and in some respects he was opinionated, narrow and prejudiced; but Mr. Thompson does not seem to think that these weaknesses are revealed in much that Bridges wrote: they resulted in some bad poems written during the Boer war and some political polemics which even Mr. Thompson cannot stomach in *The Testament of Beauty*.

Mr. Thompson does not relate Bridges' achievements to those of other poets. He seems to regard him as unique: a well-nigh perfect poet and perfect personality, with a few superficial defects which do not affect his work and life as a whole.

Up to a certain point this treatment of Bridges seems justified. It is possible to regard him simply as a craftsman and to trace the development of his craft throughout his long life, noting the few fallings off which are the more striking by contrast with the achievement of the whole life work. It is scarcely necessary to relate such a study of craftsmanship to the work of Bridges' contemporaries, because there is almost no comparison.

Yet Mr. Thompson does take us further than discussion of craftsmanship when he attempts to make wider judgments, such as this of the *Shorter Poems*: "No other collection of English lyrics contains an equal number, or anything like half the number, of poems entirely flawless." Unless this statement means that *Shorter Poems* is the best book of lyrics in the language, or, at any rate, contains some of the best lyrics written in English, it has little critical value. By the same standards, Mr. Thompson gives the highest praise to the sonnet sequence *The Growth of Love*. It is when he comes to Bridges' masques, plays and other dramatic experiments, that a difficulty crops up which his "technical" approach enables him to pass over in discussing the lyrical poems. This difficulty is that, although Bridges wrote several plays, he took not the slightest interest in the stage, that he "spared himself the trouble of making stories," that he was not interested in character, and that, of course, he thoroughly disapproved of any bawdry or coarseness in the drama (in fact, he wrote an essay chastising Shakespeare for his coarseness). Hence it seems that there is a flaw in the view of Bridges as a flawless technician. It seems remarkable that one who is extolled as a perfectionist should so completely disregard the problems of style and manner when he is writing in a form which is slightly outside his range. Is it not likely that where Bridges is most successful in his early poems it is because he confined himself to an extremely limited subject matter? Is it not uncritical to talk of the "most flawless poems

the language without comparing Bridges' bject matter with that of other writers? Can r. Thompson really maintain that it means very uch to say that *Shorter Poems* contains more flawless poems" than Swinburne's *Poems and allads*, or, for that matter, than Kipling's *arrack Room Ballads*, or than Arthur Waley's anslations from the Chinese, all of which, in eir different ways, are flawless?

It is extremely difficult to put one's finger on e weakness in Bridges, which it is surely im-ssible to ignore, because it runs through nearly his work. Perhaps it is really an almost com-ete lack of psychological insight, a quality which considerable poets is almost the *sine qua non* of etry. It is difficult to believe that a writer of y psychological insight could have deplored hakespeare's bad taste in creating such a haracter as Falstaff, and in an essay on Shake-eare's faults of construction and taste, have ritten:

Shakespeare should not be put into the hands of the young without the warning that the foolish things in his plays were written to please the foolish, the filthy for the filthy, and the brutal for the brutal; and that, if out of veneration for his genius we are led to admire or even tolerate such things, we may be thereby not conforming ourselves to him, but only degrading ourselves to the level of his audience, and learning contamination from those wretched beings who can never be forgiven their share in preventing the greatest poet and dramatist in the world from being the best artist.

Mr. Thompson commends this essay highly, t it seems that if Shakespeare had been Bridges' ea of a "perfect artist" his plays would have en unactable before any audience possessed of man emotions and bodies.

Mr. Thompson's intense admiration for Bridges es not enable him convincingly to create a nversationalist who, he tells us, was like Dr. hnson, plus imagination and critical subtlety. ere is a specimen of Bridges' Johnsonian wit. someone he said:

"I *detested* his philosophy: his religion I *despised* nd I didn't think much of his poetry. *But* he was a very nice fellow. 'This placed the poet in question and made everything clear.' Some people say he's a Jew. But *I* say—he's only a Welshman."

The reader must judge for himself whether he inks this is subtler than Samuel Johnson. ost readers will think that doubtless it was very nny at the time and, since Bridges objected so rongly to brutality in others, they will give m credit for not intending what appear to be e touches of brutality in some of the anecdotes related by Mr. Thompson. Obviously, Bridges was, within his limits, a very great man, and one may regret, with Gerard Manley Hopkins, that the limits were narrow and even rather inhuman. This would, incidentally, be a better book if Mr. Thompson had made more use of the Hopkins letters to Bridges, which are sternly critical and yet which somehow reveal the man in more greatness than does much adulation.

Mr. Thompson is surely right in indicating that *New Verse* is Bridges' greatest book of lyrics. A more critical view would perhaps have revealed that in this volume something more than a change in technique had taken place: it can be paralleled with the change in Yeats's work in *The Tower*. There is humanity, humour and an exceptional tolerance and depth of feeling, to a greater degree than in *The Testament of Beauty*. Myself, I would place the poem *Poor Poll* in this volume, which Mr. Thompson does not rate highly, amongst his greatest work. The chapter on *The Testament of Beauty* is instructive, but it has the weaknesses of Mr. Thompson's method: after praising the book highly, he proceeds to point out which passages are good and which bad. It is true that *The Testament of Beauty* can easily be treated in this way, because it reveals more than any other Bridges' greatnesses and his weaknesses. But ultimately these spring from the same source, the failure in his education and his self-education: the failure, in a word, to accept humanity as it is.

STEPHEN SPENDER

AIR FORCE SLANG

A Dictionary of R.A.F. Slang. By ERIC PARTRIDGE. *Michael Joseph.* 6s.

Much the liveliest slang of this war comes from the R.A.F. It is, to begin with, a special language designed, like Public School slang, to be exclusive. Eton boys go to Pop, or belong to it, I'm not sure which: it excludes me. The R.A.F. man flies a Ham-Bone, puts it away in the shed, goes and sees a taxidermist, courts a cat. He prangs the table-leg, he sleeps (if unlucky) in an iron lung. He is, of course, genned up, not a clueless type. On every possible occasion he, or the person he is talking to, has had it. We haven't. I am still a little puzzled about seeing the taxidermist; Mr. Partridge, usually so explicit, informs us only that it means the common "go and get stuffed," and I don't know what that means, even after looking it up elsewhere. The other terms are fairly simple. Ham-Bone is a Hampden Bomber, prang one can guess, and the Iron Lung, felicitously named, is a Nissen hut.

Where R.A.F. slang differs from public school slang is in being new and expressive. Some phrases have been taken over from old stock, including one example of back slang and another of rhyming slang, but these are so few as to be hardly noticeable. A fresh eye has found the perfect common words for technicalities. We know at once, if we have ever seen an aircraft, what a "blister" is, though it takes Mr. Partridge sixteen words to define: "an excrescence that, on an aircraft, serves to enclose and house a machine-gun or a cannon." Equally happy are *aviate* (to show off while flying), *kiwi* or *penguin* (office airmen), to *have football feet* (bungle the foot-controls), *the pigs are up* (barrage balloons), *grab for altitude* (get angry), *goggled goblin* (night-fighter pilot), *Mae West* (this is now the officially accepted term), *yellow doughnut* (the airmen's dinghy), *to play pussy* (dart from one cloud to another), *the ditch* (the English Channel), etc. And this inventiveness extends to civilian life in which one would welcome *snake-charmers* (dance band) and more permanent words such as *ropey* (slack, careless of appearance) and *goon* (a gaper). It will be noticed that nearly all the words and phrases I have quoted are briefer than the terms they displace: that most tedious of all devices—comic circumlocution—is refreshingly absent.

The attitude of these new word-coiners, as it strikes the reader of Mr. Partridge's dictionary, may be a little hard to define; it is tough and ironic where slang of most kinds is humorously commiserating. Perhaps the word for it is defiant. A light contempt is expressed for a number of people, higher and lower ranks, ground fliers, lady killers, air-sea rescue men, service police: for everyone, that is, except the active flier. The business of bombing is referred to in terms of leaving visiting cards, laying eggs, distributing cookies: I doubt if any airman is, or possibly can be, affected by his own destructiveness. All feeling is kept for the death of companions, the danger to himself. The cluster of words round this emotion shows often a deceptive jauntiness, but some of the more simple phrases go beyond irony. Dead stick, applied to an engine that has given out; to write oneself off; gone for a Burton; gone for six; blood wagon or meat wagon, the station ambulance; is it only imagination that detects

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HARRAP

here an altered tone? Obliquely, too, the idea of death spreads in an occasional image where one wouldn't expect it; the joking, for example, in *rigger mortis* (a useless or stupid type, "dead above the ears") seems forced and remote. Such displacements, however, are rare. The surface remains hard, fresh and shiny.

Mr. Partridge is so old a campaigner in this field that I hesitate to make criticisms. His agreeable introduction, however, seems to underrate American influences, which appear everywhere and not only in the use of particular American phrases and portmanteau words. In detail, I wish he had been able to find more sources than he has; but that, I suppose, was not possible. I don't understand why panic (noun and verb) should be given as slang when both uses are to be found in the O.E.D. Nor do I understand the categories, Standard English, Colloquial, and Slang. Who decides them? These, however, are negligible points about a book that has been admirably compiled and elegantly printed. There are about 800 words in this slim collection which, unlike most dictionaries, can be read with pleasure straight through. G. W. STONIER

JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRACY

Majority Rule and Minority Rights. By H. S. COMMAGER. *Oxford: Humphrey Milford.* 6s.

The democratic tradition in England has never been very sympathetic to the argument that the powers of government are limited. On the contrary, Parliament has asserted with increasing force that it alone—and ultimately the electorate—shall define the limits of authority for itself, for the executive and for the courts. We have, that is, secured both the right to do wrong to minorities if we please and the experience which teaches us that, as a general rule, it is wiser to avoid it. Normally, we accept with Jefferson the opinion that dissenters should be left "undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated" where reason is left free to combat them.

With the Americans it is different. By their constitution the Supreme Court is empowered to measure the validity of State or Congressional legislation—a power to which has been added a tradition of protection for individual and minority rights. In this short but penetrating essay, Professor Commager sets out to debunk what he considers to be a legend without foundation. There are, he says, two political institutions which go back to the foundation of the Republic yet appear to be fundamentally opposed to each other. It was in America that the doctrine of majority rule was first successfully asserted. At the same time, the men who asserted it devised machinery for maintaining the principle of limited government. Thus:

> we have first . . . the principle that men can alter, abolish and institute governments, can, in short, make government conform to their will. But over against this we have . . . the principle that there are things that not even a majority may require a government to do because they are outside the jurisdiction of government.

This antithesis emerges at every important political crisis in American history. But between the Civil War and the New Deal the emphasis on the latter principle is so marked that:

> it is no exaggeration to say that tenderness for the minority became the distinguishing characteristic of the American constitutional system.

Now this line of argument presumes that majority rule must necessarily be harsh for those who are not fortunate enough to be in power. From that it is but a short step to presenting the judiciary—the non-elective and irremovable branch of the government—as the only one fitted to pass independent and unbiased judgment upon the validity of laws. But, as Mr. Commager points out, whilst nobody will deny that the judges of the higher courts are more learned in law than most members either of Congress or State legislatures, rejection of legislation by the Federal Courts has, for the most part, been an exercise of discretion rather than of legal erudition. Before the turn of the century, Mr. Justice Holmes was insisting that Supreme Court decisions should be reached on grounds of policy and social advantage, and that "it is vain to suppose that solutions can be attained merely by logic and the general propositions of law that nobody disputes." Similarly, after an examination of the outstanding decisions reached by the Supreme Court, Mr. Commager concludes that judicial nullification has scarcely ever rested on an unambiguous legal definition. Considerations of policy, half-articulate prejudices, environment and experience are all expressed ultimately in the stand taken by the judiciary on any major issue. Historically, it has sought to perform the duty with which Hamilton charged it, to act as a guardian of property against the "turbulent and uncontrolling disposition" of the people.

What, over the years, has the practice of judicial revision achieved? Mr. Commager is scathingly critical of its accomplishments: for, he asserts, had there been no right of annulment of Congressional acts by the courts, the constitution of the United States would not be essentially different. For most of the decisions invalidating legislation

> have been cancelled out by amendment, by new—and more acceptable—legislation, or, more frequently, by judicial reversal.

To the layman who supposes that the Supreme Court has continuously intervened to protect life, liberty and property from the unbridled tyranny of majority rule, Mr. Commager argues that the record

> discloses not a single case, in a century and a half, where the Supreme Court has protected freedom of speech, press, assembly, or petition against Congressional attack . . . intervened on behalf of the under-privileged—the Negro, the alien, women, workers, tenant-farmers.

But, on the other side of the ledger, the result of many Supreme Court decisions has been

> to defeat Congressional efforts to free slaves, guarantee civil rights to Negroes, to protect working-men, outlaw child labour, assist hard-pressed farmers. . . .

On the evidence it is Congress, not the Court, which emerges as the guardian of minorities and the watchdog of liberty.

This is a formidable indictment. Yet Mr. Commager realises that it is too late to do more than dispel some of the illusions about the judiciary. In any case, his central problem is unsolved by this critical analysis. If free reign be given to majority rule, where may the minority look for its protection? In a democracy, Mr. Commager argues, checks and compromises are to be found elsewhere than in constitutional provisions. Within every party, in committees, in congressional debates, in the ebb and flow of opinion and in the unfettered right of the press to discuss public issues, each group or sectional interest makes itself heard, fights for place and power. Part of the technique of power is the ability to reconcile the claims of different groups for recognition, assistance and protection. Flexibility, too, is another asset of democratic politics; in cases of particular necessity the majority may ride down the minority, and, more often, the minority delay and defeat its rulers. But in either case, power and responsibility for its exercise rest clearly where they belong—in the people—not in some quasi-independent body. The right to make mistakes and to profit by them is the most valuable part of political education. If issues of liberty are customarily decided in the courts and the idea gets about that rights are automatically safeguarded there, public apathy is the inevitable result. Mr. Justice Frankfurter said much the same thing in a recent judgment. "Education in the abandonment of foolish legislation," he insisted, "is itself a training in liberty."

There is much in this masterly essay which can be read with profit by those who, like ourselves, live under the umbrella of majority rule rather than the parasol of judicial protection. But the most striking impression that it makes is the virility of the Jeffersonian tradition. Mr. Commager, like Jefferson, has a faith in the capacity of the people to govern themselves. In the history of his countrymen he finds no proof that majorities do not govern in a stable and law-abiding fashion or are given to outrageous contempt for minority rights. Where they have departed from constitutional integrity the courts have intervened to protect individual victims. But one must have a bold faith in reason to declare, like Mr. Commager, that on a long-term judgment judicial revision has not justified itself. For, he says,

> it has supported the notion that what is constitutional is good, it has, above all, deprived democracy of its most important training ground—experience. . . . Our own experience, I believe, justifies Jefferson's faith that men need no masters—not even judges.

This book will vex conservative people; but it will make most of its readers think, for it deals with the central problem of democracy everywhere. NORMAN MACKENZIE

INSIDE INFORMATION

Springboard: Poems, 1941-1944. By LOUIS MACNEICE. *Faber.* 6s.

Eros in Dogma. By GEORGE BARKER. *Faber.* 6s.

Each of these volumes contains three years' sifted work by a contemporary English poet of the first importance. Both authors, incidentally, are of Irish origin. Each book is a crisp, wide-margined, comparatively luxurious example of book-production for wartime, and for six shillings. Most of those interested in living poetry will read them; many such will buy them. It is not for this section of the public, let me say at the outset, that this review is being written. There will be no probing here, for example, into the question of why certain critics hold that Mr. Barker and Mr. Dylan Thomas revived, ten years ago, poetic romanticism. I am going to suggest, instead, that Mr. MacNeice's collection—and, to a considerable extent, Mr. Barker's also—will have something to say even to those who do not usually read modern poetry at all. My reason is that, to-day, much of the best poetry happens, besides being poetry, to be news. What is more, it is the news behind the news.

There is a popular misconception that contemporary poets under—roughly—fifty are difficult to understand. I propose to do what I can, in a necessarily short article, to disprove this. Are they more difficult to understand than, for instance, the morning newspaper? Or the radio? You read the one, and listen to the other, to find out the news—the truth, if possible—about politics and the war, in general, and about individuals, their exploits and ideas, in particular. But is there anything more difficult than successfully to extract the real news from the censored, biased, policy-ridden press, and radio, of to-day? The best you can do is invariably to try to read, or listen, between the lines.

Here, by Mr. MacNeice, is the news behind the news.

> Patriots, dreamers, die-hards, theoreticians, all
> Can't we ever, my love, speak in the same language,
> Or shall we go, still quarrelling over words, to the wall?
> Have we no aims in common?

Have you a more personal problem? Are you bored to death by the idea of the Mess to-night? Here is part of a portrait of the man who bores you most.

> With a pert moustache, and ready candid smile
> He has played his way through twenty years of pubs
> Deckchairs, lounges, touchlines, junctions, homes,
> And still as ever popular, he roams
> Far and narrow, mimicking the style
> Of other people's leisure, scattering stubs.

Or possibly you find the Mess simply wizard. Except for that bitter old so-called intellectual?

> Who is that man with the handshake? Don't you know;

He is the pinprick-master, he can dissect
All your moods and manners, he can discover
A selfish motive for anything—and collect
His royalties as recording angel. No
Reverence here for hero, saint or lover.
Are you worried about drink?
This is the only road for the self-betrayed to follow—
The last way out that leads not out but in.
Are you lazy, yet guilt-stricken? Or are you tormented by the thought of wasted time and opportunities? Here is solace of a kind.
You're not going yet? I must; I have to work.
Though no one better relished halcyon days
Behind his eyes the winch of will was busy
And dizzy ways led zigzag through the murk.
He always broke off so, abrupt but shy
In knowledge of his mission, veered and tacked
To his own breezes—till as a variation
His explanations cracked and threw the words awry:
You're not going yet? I must; I have to die.
Are your problems not so personal? Having read your morning paper, do you perhaps begin to despair of people themselves? You may find certain reassurance in these lines from a long and magnificent poem called *The Kingdom*.
Subjects all of the Kingdom but each in himself a king.
These are the people who know in their bones the answer
To the statesman's quiz and the false reformer's crude
Alternatives and ultimatums. These have eyes
And can see each other's goodness, do not need salvation
By whip, brochure, sterilisation or drugs,
Being incurably human . . .

Mr. Barker is younger than Mr. MacNeice, and has been called by some—inaccurately, I think—"purer" poet. What people really mean by "purer" is more inward-looking. So Mr. Barker's approach is, of course, different to that of Mr. MacNeice, and his version of the news is more individual. It is also, as it happens, more tragical. But both are poets in their evaluation of the vital truths, and lies, of our civilisation. In the following melodious and poignant lines, there speaks the European man-of-conscience of to-day.

Everywhere is our wilderness everywhere.
I hear the scapegoat's scream wherever I go
And not only from my throat but also
Everyone is our scapegoat everyone.
When by the ilex I lie in the sun
Thinking I'm free a moment, then the crown
Of bleeding Christian leaves comes down
The scapegoat coronation also there.

And here is one terrible reason for those words:

The ache at the break of the heart
Is nothing: a pearl knows this.
What remains eternally intolerable is always
The justice, the justice.

The following is a poem for separated lovers.

Lovers for whom the world is always absent
Move in their lonely union like twin stars
Twining bright destinies around their cause:
They dazzle to shadow with a meridian present
The wallflower world. Redundant it shall resent
The kiss that annihilates and the gaze that razes.
O from their clasp a new astronomy rises
Where, morning and evening, the dominant Venus
Dimisses all sad worlds that turn between us,
And we shall kiss behind our mask of faces.

Eros in Dogma includes the *Pacific* sonnets, first published in *Horizon* in 1940, and the *American* sonnets, here renamed *Supplementary Personal Sonnets*, which appeared in Tambimuttu's 1942 *Poetry in Wartime*. Among these are the moving and deservedly celebrated poems *To My Brother* and *To My Mother*, the latter beginning:

Most near, most dear, most loved and most far,
Under the window where I often found her
Sitting as huge as Asia, seismic with laughter,
Gin and chicken helpless in her Irish hand . . .

Thus, Mr. Barker is not always tragical, or inward-looking. And he passes on the news to us, like Mr. MacNeice, ungarbled. When he says, as he does in this volume—

Somewhere an Austrian corporal shall be mute
At whose word once, from Europe to the sky,
Suddenly everyone everywhere began to die.

—he does not imagine, and neither does Mr. MacNeice, that this will be the solution. The solution—I am sure that both would agree—has seldom been better set forth than in the lines below. They are by a third poet, Mr. Auden, and they also make the news behind the news quite clear. I see them as the headlines in the Final Night Extra of our time.

All I have is a voice,
To undo the folded lie,
The romantic lie in the street
And the lie of Authority
Whose buildings grope the sky:
There is no such thing as the State
And no one exists alone:
Hunger allows no choice
To the citizen or the police
We must love one another or die.

BRIAN HOWARD

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

ELGAR: *Second Symphony in E flat.* B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra., cond. Sir Adrian Boult (H.M.V. DB6190–5).

WAGNER: *Mastersingers of Nuremberg Suite.* Hallé Orch., cond. Barbirolli (C3416–7).

TIPPETT: *Concerto for Double String Orchestra.* Orch. cond. Walter Goehr (3 discs, Schott & Co.).

COATES: *The Three Elizabeths.* National Symphony Orch., cond. Eric Coates (Decca K1109–10).

VERDI: *No Star Shone (Il Trovatore, Act I)*, and *Why Fear for Me (ditto, Act IV).* Joan Hammond, with London Symphony Orch., cond. Süsskind (H.M.V. C3419).

STRAUSS: *Morgen*, and BALFE: *Come into the Garden, Maud.* Webster Booth, acc. Gerald Moore (H.M.V. C3418).

BUSCH (WILLIAM): *Four Songs.* Henry Cummings, acc. Ivor Newton (Decca M576).

BALAKIREV: *Islamey.* Louis Kentner (Col. DX1175).

One of the most insidious evils of total war is that it totally destroys the *sense* of happiness. Those moments when, free of care, our mind and senses are possessed as by a glory, and are rapt out of the abrasive tube of the temporal flux: such moments grow fewer and fewer as we sink deeper into the funnel of war, and perhaps finally cease altogether. Yet these moments are the cause of many works of art and the effect of others. How many of us, for instance, have had that sense of perfect happiness after a fine performance of *The Mastersingers!* The *Wahn-Monolog*—did Hitler but know it—is the perfect refutation of the Nazi view of German destiny; here, as perhaps nowhere else in his operas, Wagner rose completely superior to the dogmatism and self-assertion of his own character. Buy these fine records and test my point for yourself. They will hardly disappoint you, in any case; the orchestral playing, despite a certain lack of tension in the conducting, is magnificent, especially in the Prelude to Act III (the rest of the suite is taken from the final scene of the opera).

The same sense of glory attends Elgar's *Second Symphony. Falstaff* may be more wholly successful, *Gerontius* more spiritually profound, the *Cello Concerto* more lyrical; but nowhere else in Elgar's music do we find that phase of energy and that comprehensive perception of the world combining to express themselves in the form of beauty. It is generally known that the Second Symphony was composed as a memorial to King Edward VII; but how many people have noticed the two words—*Venice—Tintagel*—which are printed at the conclusion of the score? Yet how those words illuminate the music itself! The first movement is shot through with the peculiar quality of Venetian light—gold on the surfaces of Tintoretto and Titian, nacreous on the water and the reflective walls of palaces, with mysterious grey gleams under bridges and archways, and at night where lamps are few in the narrow alleys. In Venice

Company Meeting

MARTINS BANK

YEAR OF NEW EXPANSION

PRESSING PROBLEM OF EXPORTS

THE 114th annual meeting of Martins Bank Ltd. was held on Tuesday, January 23rd, at Liverpool.

Mr. Frederic A. Bates, chairman, in a statement which was circulated with the report and accounts said:—

The bank's balance sheet shows new expansion. Total assets exceed £221,300,000, customers' deposits being now at the substantial figure of £204,244,000, an increase of £24,100,000 on the year. Investments stand at £61,000,000. Advances have kept steady at about the present figure.

Cash, balances with other banks, market money, Treasury bills and Treasury deposit receipts amounting to £117,690,000 indicate the continued extreme liquidity of the bank. In addition, there are our large holdings of British Government short-dated securities.

Net profit for the year is £641,295, an increase of £34,595. £200,000 has been added to the published reserve, bringing that fund up to £4,000,000; reserve for future contingencies again takes £100,000, and reserve for pensions £50,000. The balance carried forward is £411,635, a decrease of £20,708, due to the larger amount placed to the published reserve.

In view of forecasts of possible early termination of the war, many national problems of great importance are being pressed forward for immediate settlement. It may be considered inadvisable that all these far-reaching schemes should be taken in hand at the same time, as to attempt that might endanger their success. It is proper, however, that thought should be given to the many perplexities that will confront the nation so that we may turn towards fresh enterprises without delay. Housing and employment will undoubtedly come first, and in considering the latter it must not be forgotten that this country's position, and indeed existence in anything comparable with our present status, depends upon our overseas trade. We shall require large quantities of imported goods of many kinds, but to pay for these we must export, and it is, therefore, our foreign trade that calls for experienced and untrammelled consideration at the present time. The standards of living and employment can best be improved by the development of that trade. Other nations will be eager to establish markets, and we shall only gain our fair share of world commerce by our preparedness and efficiency, and by the quality, price and suitability of our goods. After the war there will be changed conditions requiring a fresh outlook on our part, but if we adapt ourselves with the same enterprise that built up the commerce and industry of this country, under free and fair competition we need not fear the future. Traders fully appreciate the need for a vigorous policy and it is therefore appropriate that I should repeat the assurance in my statement of last year of the bank's readiness to grant accommodation to its customers. As you will observe, our balance sheet is very liquid and the bank is in a strong position to undertake such finance (the proper employment of a bank's funds) as soon as proposals can be placed before us. There will be many new opportunities of utilising banking resources in the revival of businesses that have perforce languished owing to the paramount national effort. Funds will be required by many organisations in the change-over to peace conditions, for the installation of new machinery, replenishment of normal stocks, and for re-equipment and expansion generally. These are matters we have continually before us, so far as the main war tasks permit. You will, therefore, be glad to know that your own bank looks forward to assisting both the small and the large trader in the work of restoring the home and foreign trade of the country.

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water is content to be a mirror; at Tintagel it is an element, so the Scherzo of the symphony is full of the spume flicked by the wind from the crests of breakers. This is the energy of Nature, where before it was the energy of Man reflected by Nature. And between the two, joining the beauties of North and South, a meditation on the theme of transience which triumphs over sadness as surely as the Venetian light triumphs over the decay of the vision which created that inevitable city.

This latest recording is a splendid achievement for all concerned. The performance is nearly perfect, and the recording as successful in steadiness of the *pianissimi* as in its management of the strenuous and full-scored passages. The typical Elgarian texture is one to which you can go on adding notes almost *ad infinitum*—and indeed its detractors always do point a disgusted finger at the thickness of the harmony. But objections to Elgar's music are ultimately objections to the quality of his mind, and on so personal a level argument is of little value. On the other hand, an examination of any of his scores reveals (as neither Brahms nor Bruckner invariably do) a minute care in the disposition of parts and the orchestral layout of a sequence. Look at the part-writing in the scherzo of this symphony: it is unexceptionable and extremely clever. Even at his most elaborate—and this symphony contains some damascene pages—Elgar never mixes his tones as indiscreetly as some other great composers of that day. In any case this recording is so beautifully clear that scarcely a detail is lost. I have only one reservation to make: I should have liked the conclusion of the first movement to be more tempestuous—to throw the cap still higher into the air.

Already in these columns I have expressed my high opinion of Michael Tippett's *Concerto for Double Strings*. This is a fine recording of a very vital performance, and though the number of sets is at present limited, the publishers hope to have further stocks from time to time. Meanwhile those who can snatch a set will be lucky.

Eric Coates is a composer who knows his business and does it extremely well. A comparison with Edward German would perhaps not be odious; at all events both are what, in the world of poetry, are styled "able versifiers." I doubt if Mr. Coates would claim more for himself—except a brilliantly correct performance, which he here gets. The National Symphony Orchestra is certainly an ensemble to be reckoned with. Whether music of this kind leads the uneducated on into the inner sanctum of great music, or merely beguiles them to remain in the vestibule, I would not care to judge. That it is in its own way far more skilful and musically agreeable than most "light" music or jazz, I think unquestionable.

Miss Joan Hammond's latest recordings are as acceptable as Italian opera in English ever can be expected to be. More, I hope, I need not say.

Come Into the Garden Maud is first-class fun, and should not on any account be missed. Sung with a full appreciation of its particular quality, this song charms by its fecklessness, its brazen acceptance of the primrose path in melody and harmony. *Morgen* has rather different claims: it sails very close to the wind indeed; but it is admitted to be a genuinely moving song. I think the orchestral accompaniment preferable, however, since only strings can achieve the smoothness essential to the shifting harmonies in the second half of the song. Elisabeth Schumann's recording remains the best.

The poems William Busch has chosen to set are by "A. E.", James Stephens and Blake. The performance, and the recording (made under the auspices of the Committee for the Promotion of New Music) seem adequate.

Mr. Kentner makes an immaculate job of what must surely be one of the most defiant pieces ever written for the piano.

In conclusion I must express the hope that the Gramophone Company has not missed the opportunity, presented by the recent visit to this country of Francis Poulenc and Pierre Bernac, to invite these admirable artists to make records—especially of Poulenc's latest and most charming songs. If so, a second opportunity will occur in March, when the two artists are to pay us a second visit. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competition

No. 782

Set by John Lilburne

I have often wondered what Caligula's horse thought of his master. Competitors are invited to submit a 200-word opinion of their master or mistress by the pets of any prominent figure in literature or history. Obvious examples, of course, are St. Jerome's lion and Bruce's spider. Entries by February 5th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 779

Set by Sam Smiles

Prizes of four guineas are offered for the best telegrams containing a proposal of marriage and consisting of 26 words beginning with the letters of the alphabet in their proper order. Name and address of recipient and sender not to be included.

Competition Report by Sam Smiles

This competition looked easier than it was, and though it attracted hundreds of entries not one of them seemed to me plausible as well as amusing. Many neglected the terms of the competition, and ended with a name, usually Zachariah, and very few of the others maintained verisimilitude in the final word. Some of the most ingenious competitors devised a setting in which a word beginning with z would seem natural, but I have admitted "your zealous" and similar strains upon credulity. Punctuation is another difficulty. Here is Autolycus:

After blackmail case, discharging Edna. Fixes Gertrude. Harriet in jail. Kathleen leaving Madge now only part-time. Query, remarry Saturday? Terribly unsettled. Vacancy waiting xxxx's.—Yes. Zoe?

Remove the punctuation, particularly the final question-mark, and the telegram becomes very obscure. To allow punctuation would be unfair to the entrants who have properly refused themselves this advantage. I recommend that six prizes of fourteen shillings be distributed among Ronald Mason, L. E. J., F. C. C., Joyce Johnson, W. H. G. Price and Little Billee.

awful blow child due easter fancy getting had I just keep laughing marriage now otherwise prying question raised suggest tell untruth vicar wedding xmas yoohoo zestful. RONALD MASON

From: The King of the Weddahs

To: The Sultan of Pelentimhore.

arrange bridal contract definitely engaging fifty girls handling inevitable jealousies kindly legalise memorandum newcomers obey present queen relying solemn treaty undertaking vizier weeds xanthippes your zenana. L. E. J.

accepted baronetcy coming down expecting final glorious happiness important job kenya likely money no object propose quiet reception sorry turtle unobtainable vote wedding xmas your zealot. F. C. C.

allright baby coming dear easter fortnight guess heart is judge kid lets marry now oklahoma priest queries religious service tell us views wedding xtian yiddish zoroastrian. JOYCE JOHNSON

Telegram from Oriental Potentate to Hollywood Star: Appeal become consort declare eternal fidelity guarantee huge income jewels knightly love magnificent nuptials opulent palace queenly retinue special train unequivocal veneration within xanthocroid yashmakfree zenana. W. H. G. PRICE

although bit crazy darling expect favour gracious hand i just keep loving madly nervous of popping question rather send this utterly vile wire expectations zooming. LITTLE BILLEE

MIDLAND BANK
LIMITED

Chairman: STANLEY CHRISTOPHERSON, J.P.
Vice-Chairman, Chief of Executive: CLARENCE T. A. SADD, C.B.E., J.P., D.L.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
December 31, 1944

LIABILITIES	£
Capital paid up	15,158,621
Reserve Fund	14,110,609
Current, Deposit and other Accounts ...	1,004,140,444
Acceptances and Confirmed Credits... ...	3,689,564
Engagements	10,930,491
ASSETS	
Coin, Notes and Balances with Bank of England	106,039,485
Balances with, and Cheques on other Banks ...	35,325,156
Money at Call and Short Notice	44,502,252
Bills Discounted (Treasury Bills £35,558,903) ...	36,116,958
Treasury Deposit Receipts	392,000,000
Investments	233,288,741
Advances and other Accounts	168,084,700
Liabilities of Customers for Acceptances, etc....	14,620,055
Bank Premises	8,435,994
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Shares in Affiliated Companies	8,678,888

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Personal

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Personal—continued

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Company Meetings

MIDLAND BANK LTD.

EXTRACTS FROM STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR. STANLEY CHRISTOPHERSON

After comments on the affairs of the Bank, a part of the statement is devoted to removing deep-rooted misunderstandings about banking costs and profits, and figures are quoted to dispel any lingering idea that the banks are profiteering institutions the prime purpose of which is to pay rich dividends to a small group of people who are believed to control their policies and actions.

The statement then proceeds:

During the past year much progress has been made, both on the side of Government and of business, with the preparation of plans for the restoration of healthy flow of peace-time trade and enterprise. No one, by now, minimises the difficulty of the task of transition; yet we ought not to allow ourselves to be overawed by what at first sight are alarming statements about the magnitude and consequences of our war effort.

THE NATION'S TASK AND THE NATIONAL ASSETS

The restoration of our physical capital is a task that lies in our own hands, and it is my view that, if we tackle the job wholeheartedly, it can be accomplished in a comparatively short time. For be it stated, for our assurance, that we have learned something in this war more valuable than anything we have aspired to in previous national crises. We have risen to the demands of the emergency with a degree of unity in purpose and in action never before attained. We have yet to be told why the task of rebuilding Britain should provide less of an inspiration to united, enthusiastic effort than the task of defeating the assaults of unscrupulous enemies. I firmly believe, moreover, that once the nature of the problem is widely understood, the same inherent qualities will be vigorously applied to righting our international position, suddenly set as it has been by the unstinted contribution of everything we have to the attainment of victory.

As I read the story of this nation, the driving-power of her commercial leadership is to be found in the twin qualities of integrity and enterprise, expressed in a thousand ways throughout the ever-widening range of adventure in industry and trade. These things remain; they cannot be wrested from us by any enemy or by any combination of misfortunes; they have risen triumphant over both, again and again. The success attained in our war economy is in part the result of integrity in business, of public administration and in workmanship. In the differing circumstances of reconstruction these same qualities will be forthcoming, and as controls are relaxed and removed the field will be opened up for a resurgence of that spirit of personal enterprise which will win us back our position in international business relations and reassert our leadership in world affairs.

To set out upon a course that leads beyond reconstruction to advancement—and this at a time when our main preoccupation must still be with the task of waging war—is an act of supreme and warrantable faith in the spirit of the British people. Greater social security, improved standards of living, more leisure, better education—all these can be fitted in to the pattern of our aspirations for a happier society; but the plans depend for their fulfilment on personal morality rather than material conditions—their mainspring is the quality of the individual and his sense of duty to the whole community. Elaborate planning will be of little use unless as individuals we show the same concern for the general good, the same singleness of purpose, as have inspired the war effort of the nation.

The real, the traditional assets are still there to be used: the spirit of adventure and enterprise in undertakings; the courage and vigour to carry them out; and the efficiency and integrity to make them succeed—these are the real benefits of partnership between employees and employers. The qualities required to overcome difficulties in industry and commerce both at home and abroad are simple—they are vision, initiative and hard, honest work from everyone.

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

HON. RUPERT E. BECKETT'S STATEMENT

The annual ordinary general meeting of Westminster Bank Limited will be held on January 31st, at 41, Lothbury, London, E.C.

The following is a summary of the statement by the chairman, the Hon. Rupert E. Beckett, circulated with the report and accounts:

Deposits show an increase of £57,000,000. Loans and advances decreased on the year's average by £2,300,000. After providing for all taxation (including National Defence Contribution), the year's profit, at £1,366,907, exceeds that of 1943 by about £19,000. The usual dividends of 18 per cent. on the partly paid shares and 12½ per cent. on the stock (both less tax) will be paid. The other allocations are £300,000 to Officers' pension fund and £300,000 to Bank Premises Reinstatement and Rebuilding account.

The Ulster Bank continues to make highly satisfactory progress. The Foreign Auxiliary of Westminster Bank now happily has all its branches freed.

Before the war the deposits of the Clearing Banks amounted to £2,745,000,000, and at the end of November, 1944, the total had almost doubled, at £4,398,000,000.

War-Time Trade

War-time brings about a complete reorientation of our trade and industry, for the whole community has to concentrate its activities exclusively on the national effort. Some export trade is, of course, being transacted, but the vast bulk of the nation's output is to meet our own and our Allies' war needs, with the majority of producers engaged, directly or indirectly, for the Government, as their sole customer and debtor. This development is inevitable in a closed and controlled war economy, and producers, with their single assured customer, viz., the State, have no longer to encounter the forces of home and foreign competition.

The banks have given the readiest financial assistance to great and small firms alike, providing the means to enable the fullest expansion of production, to meet the huge demand, even in cases where a firm's own resources would not normally have justified it.

With the approaching end of the war in Europe, industries and businesses, both big and little, whose normal activities have been diverted and adapted wholly or in part to purposes of war, will need adjustment to, and equipment for, the resumption and extension of their peace-time activities.

Export Trade Development

We, as a nation, will be concerned to rebuild internally, and also externally, for our dependence upon export trade has been brought home to us with added emphasis during the war. Our internal programme must not distract our attention from the development of our export trade on an unprecedented scale.

The need for the import of raw materials which can only be paid for by exports, the necessity for the simultaneous provision of large quantities of consumption goods and the re-equipment of industry will occasion great demands on the supply alike of finance, materials and labour. In pre-war years over 50 per cent. of the resources of clearing banks were employed by way of advances in direct assistance to industry; the figure is now less than one-third of what it was. Treasury Deposit Receipts, the total of which is already nearly £1,550,000,000, form a reservoir from which may be drawn the large funds that will become necessary when the war ceases.

The accumulated war-time savings of the nation, in so far as they remain in the hands of the banks and become available by the retirement of Treasury Deposit Receipts, will, through the intermediary of the banking system, be devoted to the provision of finance for the furtherance of desirable schemes of industrial development, for essential re-equipment and for the export trade. Finance is less likely to be a limiting factor than the availability of materials and labour.

The impact of war demonstrated the adequacy of the preparations made by the banking system, and similarly peace, when it comes, will find them fully sufficient for all requirements.

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

STATEMENT BY THE RT. HON. LORD WARDINGTON

The annual general meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited will be held in London on February 2nd. Following is a summary of the address by the Chairman, the Rt. Hon. Lord Wardington, circulated to members with the report and accounts.

The figures of our Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet. Our profit at £1,655,000 is £140,000 more than last year, and must, I think, be regarded as eminently satisfactory. The total of our Current, Deposit and other Accounts is the highest in the history of the bank, and is £91,000,000 more than it was last year. It finds its counterpart in the rise in our Treasury Deposit Receipts. Practically the whole of our increase in deposits has been lent to the Government in the form of Treasury Deposit Receipts. These, as Members know, give a gross return of 1½ per cent., and, as a large part of our increase in deposits is interest bearing, the advantage from a profit-earning point of view is not great. It must also be remembered that our expenses have risen during the year.

The other changes in our Balance Sheet figures are not of great importance with the exception of our holding in Treasury Bills, which is £6,000,000 down. Cash stands at 11.4 per cent. to our deposit liabilities.

Investments are £12,000,000 less than they were last year, and Loans and Advances are also £8,000,000 less, and bear the lowest percentage to our deposits which we have ever seen, being only 12.7 per cent. The outstanding feature is the large proportion of our assets invested in Treasury Deposit Receipts. This represents over 38.4 per cent. of the deposits.

Export Trade

Much thought has been given to post-war problems, though definite conclusions are rendered difficult by the necessity for not relaxing the wartime effort. One of the most important is the prospect of our export trade. Nearly all our trade, internal and external, depends on our being able to pay for raw materials we do not possess; we also have to import a large proportion of our food. To enable us to do this, exports, both visible and invisible, are an absolute necessity, and we must recover our power to export, not only to our pre-war limits, but on a much extended scale.

The Government can do much to help, and a good deal of preparatory work has already been done. The reorganised Department of Overseas Trade, under the Foreign Office, should be able to tender useful advice, to give timely notice of impending contracts and of developments likely to provide openings for trade.

The prospects of our export trade have been recently brightened by the new arrangement in regard to lend-lease. Our gratitude for the sympathetic help and encouragement we have received from the U.S.A. cannot be exaggerated or ever forgotten.

Labour also has its part to play in restoring our export trade. Under the stimulus of war and with a whole-hearted realisation of the immensity of our common effort, it has, with some few exceptions, responded magnificently. Never has the country as a whole been so unanimous in its determination to work for a happy issue to our life struggle. When our victory over Germany is complete, and still more after the defeat of Japan, there may be a natural tendency to relax. But labour, as quickly as anyone else, has set itself against the mistakes we have made in the past, and the wise amongst them will realise that the difficult post-war period will be no time for striving for shorter hours or restrictions on output. After all we have gone through this may sound a hard gospel, but if we are to maintain our position in the world we shall all have to work harder than ever.

Lastly, we come to the part which the banks can play in restoring our export trade. This bank, to assist its exporter customers, has for many years maintained records of commodities produced by them so that information may be supplied in response to enquiries from overseas. This Exports Index has recently been revised. A kindred service is provided by the bank gathering from its correspondents abroad information as to the needs of overseas importers. Information and guidance is available through our well-equipped Colonial and Foreign Department.